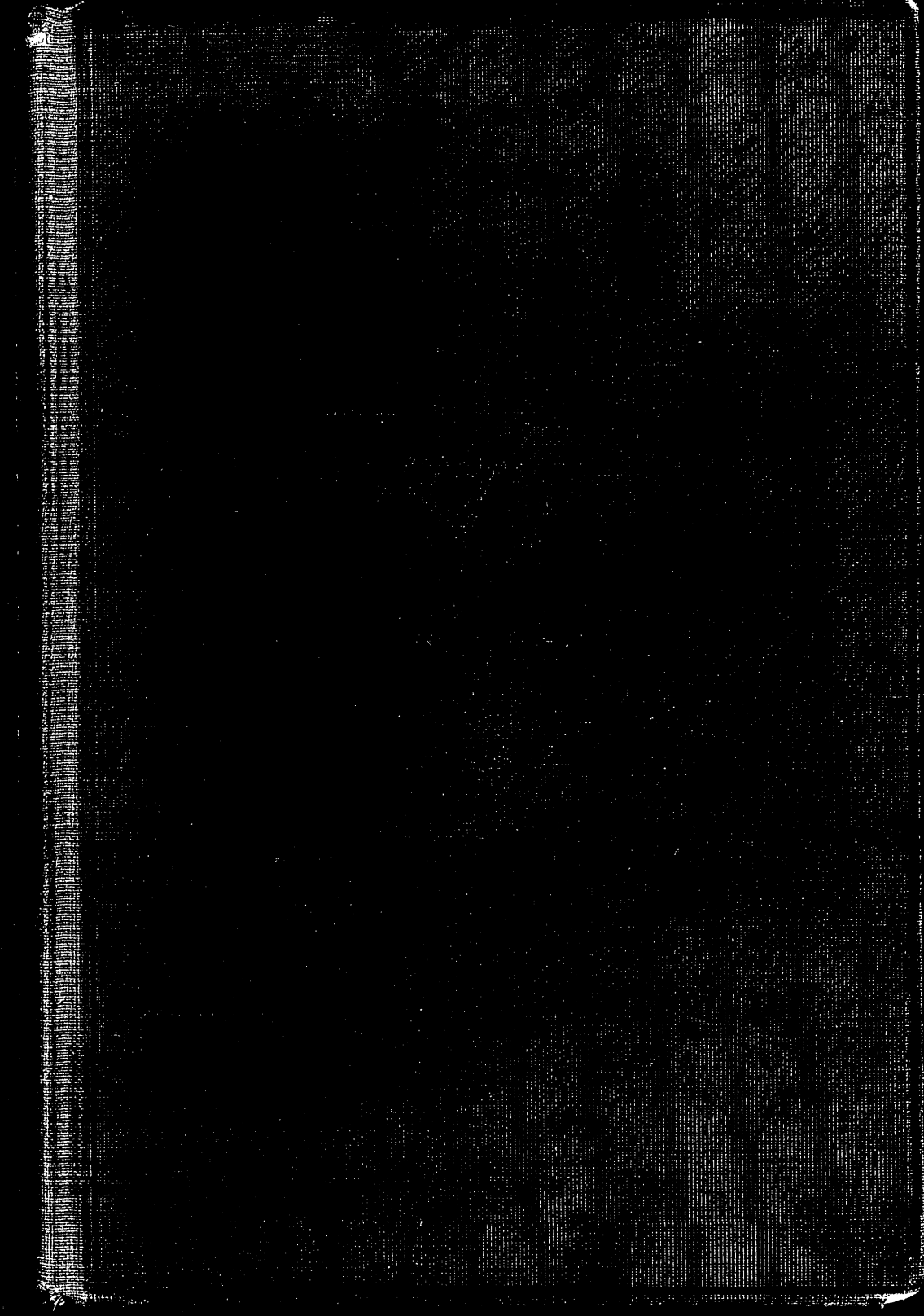




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To  
THE MEMORY OF  
E. L. P. JR.



## PREFACE

**T**HIS book goes to the reader uncensored. It does not contain all that I wanted to say, but as far as it goes it says just what I felt like saying and says it in the way I felt like saying it. I have long believed that the least excusable of all existing hindrances to the spread of religion is the deadly handicap which a tyrannical tradition has placed upon the lips and pens of religious teachers. When my editorial friend across the street sits down to write his "leader" for the morning paper—whether it is about war, or politics, or eugenics, or the latest craze in woman's dress—he is expected to put down the thing that comes up from his heart and to put it down just as it comes. But when I sit down to write about religion, I am expected to smooth my hair, arrange my necktie, assume a saintly pose, and when I have succeeded in exuding from and enveloping myself in a pious atmosphere thick enough to cut with a knife, take my pen in hand and with the fear of the medieval board of religious censors (the gods of Orthodoxy and Propriety) before my eyes, proceed to set down such commonplace remnants of thought and vocabulary as I feel reasonably sure will pass their inspection. I have never been able to see why I should submit my pen to such a handicap. I have never seen any reason why a man who has

always insisted upon the right to voice his innermost feelings in his own way about everything else that lies close to his heart should be denied the privilege of uttering himself in his own way about the one thing that lies closest to his heart of all. I might act a part in writing of war, or politics, or eugenics, or the latest craze in woman's dress, but it has always seemed to me that when I come to write of such a matter of the heart as religion I ought to write from my heart. And so it has been my habit in writing on religious subjects to write as a rebel. Not that I have had anything horrifying to say. I have only insisted upon saying what I had to say in my own way without hampering myself with the traditional pose. It may not be the best way, but it is my habit and I have found no good reason to break myself of it. The truth is I am not strong enough to do my work with such a handicap anyway, and if I were I don't see how a man can consent to go to his work with one arm tied to his side, if he really has his heart in his job.

E. L. P.

RICHMOND, VA.

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## I

# WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE PRESENT UNREST?

## I

**T**HE psychologists tell us that when we come into this world we take things as a matter of course; a little later we begin to ask questions about things and by and by—when we are well in our teens—we begin to question the things themselves. This of course was a matter of common knowledge long before these clever gentlemen came to tell us about it, but I long since learned that in an age which professes a great contempt for authority in general one is never sure of a hearing unless one can begin with the backing of scientific authority in particular.

Another interesting bit of information for which we have the same distinguished authority is that the human race in its development has followed exactly the same order as the individual. First came the age of acquiescence, in which the race took what came to hand in true infantile fashion—without a word; next came the age of curiosity, in which it asked questions about things as it took them, and this was followed in the course of time by the age of adolescence, with its violent outburst of suspicion, in which it insisted

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upon questioning the things themselves before taking them. These three ages may not be as distinct in the history of the race as they are in the history of some boys one happens to know, but they are none the less real. The archeologist has given us undisputed evidence of the first, the historian of the second, and as for the third, we are in the very middle of it and can see for ourselves.

This last fact is to my mind the most interesting fact in the world to-day. That is, it is the most interesting for just this particular time. And it is the most comforting. While adolescence may be a horrible state to be in and a horrible thing to deal with, it is a great comfort when a boy is horrible to remember that he is an adolescent, and I have found no little satisfaction in the reflection that the world of to-day resembles nothing so much as a sixteen-year-old boy. A sixteen-year-old boy is a comfort because he is going to be older.

As I have just intimated, the evidences are all around us. All the world's present symptoms are symptoms of adolescence. Take, for example, our boyish dabbling in science and democracy. Take these boyish interrogation marks which we have defiantly chalked upon everything in creation. What else can we make out of them? And how else can we account for the fact that it was not until the world began to dabble in science and democracy that it began to go around with a piece of chalk in its pocket? Is it not in the adolescent age that a boy begins to dabble in science and democracy, and is it not when he begins to dabble in science and democ-



racy that he begins to grow suspicious and to chalk interrogation marks on things?

Of course the world had its spells of suspicion long before it entered upon its present age. But that does not signify anything. Every bright boy has them long before he reaches adolescence, but they are only momentary flare-ups. It is not until we get into our teens and begin to dabble in science and democracy that we settle down seriously to the business of questioning things.

I know that we don't care to admit—we Americans—that democracy is something which we come to in the course of time. We like to think that men are born democrats. But if men are born democrats, somehow it takes a long time for them to find it out, and until they do find it out they don't indulge in democratic ideas. We may be born free and equal, but we don't begin life by drafting a declaration of independence. If we are free and equal we don't care to say so—at least not until we are big enough to prove it. No reasonable child would agree to be born into a democracy. He needs an aristocracy. He needs to look up to his superiors. And he begins by looking up to his superiors. He does not mind admitting that people are his superiors: he needs superiors. Big, strong men who ask no favours may find joy in being democrats, but to a small boy who needs everything a democracy would be a howling wilderness. A small boy must believe in the divine right of kings.

And so, believing in the divine right of kings—of fathers and mothers, of all the great and the strong

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and the wise and the good—the small boy is content to ask questions of them about things and to take their answers as final without questioning the things themselves. He prefers it. Looking up is the religion of childhood. It is the comfort of childhood. And there is no humiliation in it. The humiliation comes when a boy listens with growing suspicion to his father's explanation of a thing and then takes the thing out behind the chimney to examine it for himself.

### II

By and by Nature goes to work to make Boy's brain over for manhood and before it can get the parts together again those great twin disturbers, Science and Democracy, come along and begin to make trouble. "All these things are lies," says Science, "and you must get rid of them;" and it proceeds to sweep out of Boy's brainbox all the precious accumulations of his childhood. Boy is shocked. He tries to think, but the screws are all loose and nothing works right and he doesn't know what to do. The next moment Democracy speaks up. "Of course they are all lies," says Democracy. "That's what you get by looking up to other people and letting them do your thinking." And then Boy rubs his eyes. "My! that's a fact!" he cries. "I'm 'most a man now and I can do it myself." And with a scornful shout he turns his back upon Authority, and with Science on one side and Democracy on the other starts off on a run for the Whirlpool.

I cannot picture adolescence. Let us call it a

whirlpool and let it go at that. For weeks and months and years the dizzy, horrible whirl will go on and at last one day poor Boy will wake up to find himself high and dry on the bank, the fever and dizziness all gone and a strange quiet brooding everywhere. And with the disillusioned eyes of a man he will look upon Science and Democracy standing by and remember that the best of servants often make the most tyrannical masters, and that the sane use and management of servants is a fundamental secret of peace in the mind even as it is in the home.

Now let us see what we can make out of our metaphor. The boy is father to the race and the race has been following in his footsteps. The race did not begin with democratic ideas. Whatever we may think of democracy we must admit that it is an after-thought. In the child age of the world there was nothing to suggest that men were born free and equal. On the contrary everything pointed the other way. The average man could not help seeing that some men were freer than himself, some stronger, some wiser, some better, and he realized his own limitations too keenly to find any satisfaction in making a declaration of independence. He preferred to make a confession of dependence. And that was the way the race began—with a confession of dependence. It began by looking up. The weak looked up to the strong. The simple looked up to the wise. And they looked up with awe. The ancients had such reverence for their sages that they could hardly open their mouths in their presence. As the race grew older men

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grew bolder and by and by began to ask questions about things; but they never questioned the answers that were given them and they never put the answers aside to question the things themselves. If wise men said that the earth was flat they were content to believe that it was flat, and they were content that it should be flat. If a man of God came to them with a "Thus saith the Lord," they were content to receive it as from the Lord. If the man was plainly a godly man that was enough: they could no more question him as to how he got his message than they could have sneaked into the Holy of Holies and peeped beneath the lid of the sacred box.

Thus for ages the race ate its meat with gladness and singleness of heart without once stopping to inquire how it was delivered or even noticing whether it was put up in sanitary packages. So long as the meat met their needs they were not concerned about methods of delivery or pure food regulations. This does not mean that they ate without discrimination. If our fathers were too polite to ask questions about the meat that was set before them they were not indiscreet: they noticed what the knowing ones at the table ate and governed themselves accordingly. Nor does it mean that they never analyzed anything. They did as we do now: they analyzed such things as they did not regard as sacred. But it must be admitted that they regarded most things as sacred. We analyze pretty much everything nowadays, not because we are brutal enough to put a knife into a sacred thing, for we are not; but because the analytical habit has taken

## The Secret of the Present Unrest 17

the sacredness out of almost everything. We still balk at a few things that we regard as sacred. No scientist, I believe, has yet undertaken to determine the actual chemical constituents of his aged mother, or to set down the number, weight and character of her thin white hairs. So long as a man regards his mother as sacred he cannot analyze her; he can only look upon her as a sacred whole. That was why in the child age of the world we could not put a knife into the Bible.

### III

In those days the world was very much like the old time Southern homes we used to know. There is a home of my dreams that comes to me now as I write these words. It was a place where *spirit* had always been spelled with a large *S* and *matter*, with an apology. It was a place where religion was an atmosphere, and not an incident; where God's love was as real as mother's love and God's law as father's law; where little children were not afraid of the Most High, yet stood in such awe of him that they would have planted their little bodies in a row against the wall and allowed themselves to be shot down before they would have used the Bible to stand upon, even to reach the preserves on the pantry shelf; where the boys were taught to worship honour and mother and womanhood after God, and to uncover their heads before everything that wore a gown, though the garment might be soiled or ragged or even scarlet; where the girls were taught that purity is the breath of angels and that a woman

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must be an angel or be damned. There Authority sat upon its throne, and the children trembled not, for they knew that Faith and Love had their arms about his neck. And there was peace. There was peace because there were authority and faith and love, and because everything was settled. The philosophy of life was settled. The good God ruled and would rule forever with or without the consent of science, and there was therefore no occasion for unrest. What is there in the heavens above or in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth to disturb the calm altitudes of a faith that makes the God of the Book as real as one's father and the Book of God as final as if it had been written by God's own hand with a quill drawn from an angel's wing?

Just imagine a home like that suddenly converted into a school-room. Imagine all the old people hustled off to the garret and all the boys and girls put down at their desks and set to dabbling in science and democracy. What would be the outcome?

Something like that happened to the race a little while ago. One day Science came along and hustled the sages off to the garret and said to the people: "Your wise men are not wise and they have not been telling you the truth. The earth is not flat. The sun does not rise; neither does it set. This little world is not the centre of the system. Why do you take these men at their word? Why don't you investigate things for yourself? See here! The earth is round and we will prove it." And Science proved it—right before their eyes. The race was shocked.

## The Secret of the Present Unrest 19

Men didn't know what to think. They thought their wise men knew. If their wise men didn't know, who did?

Then came Democracy and said: "Who is this Authority you have been bowing down to? Who gave Authority the right to rule over you and to say what you should believe? What sort of superstition is this that puts one man above another? Don't you know that you are all sovereigns? that all men are born free and equal? that the divine right of kings is a lie? that you are not children but men capable of governing yourselves and doing your own thinking?"

It was horrible! It was blasphemous! It was so blasphemous that the race stood trembling, half expecting a thunderbolt of divine wrath to strike it down. Then it rubbed its eyes and tried to think with its poor confused brain and presently it gave a sudden start, turned its back upon Authority, and with Science on one side and Democracy on the other started off with a scornful shout for the Whirlpool.

And that is where we are to-day—in the dizzy, blinding, maddening whirlpool of adolescence.

### IV

To a few ripe, manly minds of that day the coming of Science and Democracy was as the coming of Spring. There was no disturbance anywhere. The buds blossomed out silently, the birds began to sing and a sweet calm brooded over everything. It was only the coming of a new supply of life and

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wealth and beauty to the world. These men looked into the faces of the newcomers with a steady gaze, and while recognizing in them possible disturbers to the world's peace, saw in them what God intended they should be—the greatest of the new servants of men; and they welcomed them as we welcome new servants of whom we are expecting much—gladly, but with calm dignity, remembering that they are servants. They did not lose their heads in their delight, as some good women have done at the coming of a new maid of unusual promise, and in a wild, extravagant way throw the whole house open to them and put them in supreme charge. They said to Science: "We are needing facts and we are going to look to you for them. Remember that is your business—to furnish us with the facts." And they said to Democracy: "We want some ideas that will help us to solve certain important problems. That is your business—to furnish us ideas for these particular problems. We don't want your ideas for everything." And because they took Science and Democracy sanely these wonderful servants of men fell into their places and went about their work so quietly that their masters were never for a moment disturbed by their presence.

But with the vast mass of men it was different. It was like the coming of Paul and Barnabas to Lystra. The first time Paul did a wonderful thing the people jumped to the conclusion that they were both gods and went into a wild delirium over them. The first time Science did a wonderful thing the race jumped to the conclusion that Science and



Democracy were gods and went into a wild delirium of worship at their feet.

And to-day we are paying the price of our wild orgy. Instead of being in quiet possession of our house and preserving the calm dignity of masters we are the distracted slaves of our servants, kept in a perpetual whirl by the tyranny of Science and the disturbing questions of Democracy and the confusing orders of both, and never allowed to have a thought of our own or even to say where we shall sit at our own table. And life is a ceaseless fever. We wake up in the morning and the first thing our eyes rest upon is an interrogation mark. We have been over the world with Science and Democracy and we have chalked that mark on everything under the sun. And wherever we go a disturbing question springs up before us like a Jack-in-the-box. If we venture into the library or the laboratory we are beset with enough distracting questions to run us mad. We know just enough about Science for its questions to craze us. If we go into the shop Democracy confronts us with questions before which our brains fairly reel. Sometimes they set us wild and we run amuck with firebrands in our hands. Who gave that man the right to boss us? Who gave that man the right to fix our hours and wages? What about that poor fellow who was caught in that horrible machine just now and torn to shreds? What about his employer? What about his poor crazed wife who has come to look for what is left? If we drag our weary souls back home at the end of the day a dozen questions challenge us at the

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door, and if we fall down on our knees at our bedside to pray we find ourselves in a full-grown hornets' nest. Every night the race goes to bed on the verge of brain fever.

### V

We may find other secrets of the world's unrest, but this is the bottom secret. There are aggravating conditions here and there affecting particular forms of unrest, but the secret at the bottom of every form is the same: the world is in a fever for the same reason that the brain of a schoolboy in adolescence is in a fever. And remember, it is the world that is in a state of fever and not the religious world alone. Some good people have suffered much over the present religious unrest because they have lost sight of this fact. They imagine that it is only the religious world that has lost its peace. But the fever is everywhere. One may say that it is worse in religion, but I am not sure of that: look at labour. But admitting that it is worse in religion and labour than in anything else it does not follow that these spheres have suffered more than others. If we are feeling the disturbance more keenly in religion and labour than elsewhere it is only because in these spheres it comes closer home to us. It is a matter of bread—in the labour world, a matter of bread for our bodies; in the religious world, a matter of bread for our souls. We are bound to feel deeply when our bread is at stake.

And let us remember too that when a boy gets into adolescence and tries to look at things through

the eyes of Science and Democracy and everything begins to look wrong and the world gets to quaking and the very mountains begin to skip about and all the strongest and most sacred foundations of life seem to crumble, it does not necessarily mean anything except that he is an adolescent and that he has not learned to take Science and Democracy properly. By and by when he wakes up and begins to look through the eyes of a man he will find that the world is standing just where it was before and that the mountains have not moved a hairsbreadth from their places and that the old foundations are as secure as ever. He will find that there have been changes, but that everything that is really worth while continues as it was before.

And let us believe that so it will be with us. By and by the race will come to maturity and the fever will pass away and we shall awaken out of all this horrible whirl and turmoil to see that the skipping of the mountains and the crumbling of the foundations were only illusions, and that while there have been changes, neither in religion nor in anything else has anything been disturbed that was really worth while; and that in the goodness of God all that he has given us to help us in our journey upward is still with us. When that day comes we shall be able to look into the faces of Science and Democracy with a steady disillusioned gaze and we shall understand that we have blamed these great twin disturbers for many things for which we should have blamed ourselves. We shall see that we had no right to blame the best of serv-

## **24 Our Troublesome Religious Questions**

ants for the perils which we bring upon ourselves by losing our heads over them and worshipping them. When that age of sanity shall dawn a sane Science and a sane Democracy will have the first fair chance to show what they can do for a sane race.

## II

### WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH CHRISTIANITY?

#### I

**A** GAIN we have been notified that Christianity has collapsed. This is perhaps the hundredth time that this appalling announcement has been sent out since Christianity became a factor in the world; but the announcement of a collapse, unlike the cry of wolf, does not lose its power to scare by too frequent repetition. I suppose it is because so many people have a special fondness for this particular kind of scare. They are not averse to other forms of frightfulness—they like the cry of wolf well enough, if it does not come too often—but nothing gives them such delicious thrills down the spine, such exquisite sensations of perfect misery, as the sudden announcement of a gigantic and complete collapse.

I don't think I have ever seen such a trembling among the feeble knees as we have had since the last announcement was made. You can hardly turn your head that some poor forlorn creature does not stick his nose into your face and with a hoarse, hark-from-the-tombs whisper demand: "Is it true? Do you really think it is true?" And without wait-

## 26 Our Troublesome Religious Questions

ing for you to answer he adds with a gesture of finality: "It must be so. It *must*. Look at Europe." Go where you will—among anemiacs, among hypochondriacs, among sane and sensible people—and the question is always the same. "Is it true? Do you really think it is true?" And the answer is always the same. Your questioner always has it ready for you and you never have a chance to change it. You don't even have a chance to point to China.

Nothing is strange in this world nowadays, else I should like to venture upon some remarks just here on that most ancient and most persistent of all psychological mysteries, the extraordinary readiness with which the human mind accepts, even under the most serious circumstances, a sudden announcement of a collapse. Take the case of the flying machine, for instance. For weeks and months—I don't know how long—the newspapers plead with the American public to believe that a flying machine had been actually invented; yet many good people never believed it and never had the slightest intention of believing it until they were startled by a rumour that a flying machine had collapsed and killed somebody. That settled it. They had never doubted a rumour of a collapse, and if a flying machine had collapsed it seemed a fairly reasonable conclusion that a flying machine had existed.

But admitting that nothing is really strange any longer, does it not nevertheless *seem* a little odd that a sane and sensible man who is perfectly familiar with the existence of this human weakness for collapses, and who is just as familiar with the fact

## What Is the Matter with Christianity? 27

that from the beginning of time it has been the custom of hard pressed controversialists to interperse their arguments with frequent announcements of the collapse of their opponents' cause purely for psychological effect—does it not, I say, seem a little odd that a sane and sensible man should become disquieted over this hundredth announcement of the collapse of Christianity? No sane person allows himself to be disturbed over a report of this sort about anything else. Take politics, for instance. An election never passes that we do not hear of the collapse of the defeated party. I was brought up on the collapses of the democratic party. I never heard of anything else but twice, when my diet was changed for a fleeting period to the complete and final collapse of the republican party. Yet I never took these reports seriously. I never took them at all. I simply assumed that they were put out for psychological effect and left them to be swallowed by the anemics and hypochondriacs who have a morbid craving for disquieting powders and for whom they were evidently intended. Why should I take this hundredth announcement of the collapse of Christianity seriously? Why, at any rate, should I allow myself to be disturbed over it until I had at least inquired where it came from?

### II

Who is responsible for this last announcement? As everybody knows it came a few days after the worldwide collapse of peace, and was offered as an

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explanation of that horrible catastrophe. Where did it come from? Who first suggested that the collapse of peace proved the collapse of Christianity? Friends? People who had first hand knowledge of what they were talking about? Run your eye over the list. Does it include anybody who would know Christianity if he saw it? Anybody who has felt its power in his own life? Anybody to whom you would like to go if you wanted to know how to become a Christian? Anybody in whose bosom you would like to bury your face if you were in trouble? Anybody you would like to crawl close to if you were about to die? Can you find in this list the name of some mighty lover of God and humanity who would gladly climb a glacier with bare and bleeding feet if only he might find a brother to save at the top? None of that sort? What? Only scholars and philosophers and such? Ah! I understand. Not men who have had personal dealings with Christianity; not men who walk in the world of religion themselves, but men who have only an academic or scientific interest in it: students; scientific students who have a scientific interest in the phenomena of life and who study democracy and pellagra and militarism and hookworm and—yes—Christianity simply as phenomena;—these are the men who said that Christianity had collapsed!

But should not such men know what they are talking about? Well, yes and no. Certainly they ought to know if they are going to talk, but should we expect them to know? Is there any good reason why they should know? The other day I ventured



## What Is the Matter with Christianity? 29

in the presence of my son to make some innocuous observations on the subject of football, and I remember the fine scorn with which he received my innocent opinions. That was righteous scorn. I had never seen a game of football. I had never put my foot into the football world. I didn't know a quarter-back from a canvasback. I didn't know what I was talking about. And he was just to me; he didn't expect me to know what I was talking about. Now I ask, is it right that we should expect these men who never had any more to do with our religion than I have had to do with football to know what they are talking about? Is it possible for these men who are always consigning our religion to the scrapheap to know what they are talking about so long as they scorn to come into personal contact with it?

I know somebody will say that they ought to know because they are scholars and because a scholar's word should be final. But, suppose the other day my son had imagined that I was a great scholar; suppose he had known that I was the greatest scholar in the world; would he have received my observations on football less scornfully? Would he have thought that because I was a great scholar I ought to know? Does scholarship give a man the ability to express an intelligent opinion about everything? Does your mastery of Greek roots put your opinion about potato-raising above Uncle Pete's? Would you say that an incorrigible old bachelor, because of his unfathomable learning, should know more about the world of love than your

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old black mammy, who would lay down her life any moment to save yours? Well, then, why should anybody imagine that the scholarship of these men who are perpetually announcing the collapse of our religion *from a distance* should make their word about religion more valuable than that of the millions who are actually living in the world of religion and whose very lives are sustained by its atmosphere?

### III

“But look at this horrible war!” Very well; let us look at this horrible war. Certainly a catastrophe of such magnitude must prove something; but does it prove the collapse of Christianity? Is there any evidence of the collapse of Christianity in the world to-day that was not here before the war started? Did the war start because the forces of Christianity were unable to hold it back? What forces of Christianity were mobilized to hold it back? How many men who had submitted themselves to the rule of the Prince of Peace had a hand in the efforts that were made to hold it back?

We are asked to note especially how utterly Christianity failed the ruling classes of Europe in that great crisis. If Christianity collapsed among the ruling classes, where it had its supreme opportunity, surely that settles it. But did it? A thing can hardly collapse until it exists, and who would undertake to prove that the ruling classes of Europe were dominated by Christianity before the crisis came? When was it ever heard that Europe was under the rule of men who were under the rule of Christ?

## What Is the Matter with Christianity? 31

How many rulers, warriors, statesmen, diplomats, legislators of any country have ever been known to conduct their official business in accordance with the teachings of Jesus? Does any sane man believe that Europe would have been saturated with blood if its ruling classes had been saturated with the spirit of Christ?

But what about the masses? It doesn't matter what about the masses. When it comes to starting a war in Europe the masses don't count: it is only in the fighting that they count. Where the people do not govern themselves a war does not prove the collapse of anything among the masses. It only proves that they have not developed to that point in Christian manhood where men renounce the divine right of kings for the divine right of the children of God to govern themselves under the supreme rule of God. But the fact remains that neither were the masses dominated by Christianity. Certainly nobody was under that impression before the war began. Did not these very people who so enthusiastically announced the recent collapse announce just as enthusiastically many years before the war that the masses had discarded Christianity as a worn-out garment? And for once they were nearly right. Who does not know that for two generations there has been a steady drift away from the simple faith of the fathers in every part of Europe, and that many sections of the continent which once blossomed as the rose with the purest types of Christian faith and life are to-day desolate, wreck-strewn wastes in the land of the spirit?

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Take Germany, for instance. There are no better Christians in the world than one will find among the Germans, yet nothing is plainer—and no one knows it better than the German Christians themselves—that since the day that the miracles of science began to cast their spell over these remarkable people millions of them have lost their interest and faith in the miracle-working Christ, until Christianity has almost ceased to be a vital factor in the life of the nation. Millions of Germans who still go to church and read the Bible will tell you frankly that they do not accept the utterances of either. They accept the utterances of science and they follow what they believe to be the promptings of an impersonal Universal Will which is seeking to express itself through the German people, and they worship duty, which they understand to mean absolute obedience to superiors, and they revere the State, which they have idealized as their supreme lawgiver, making obedience to the State the highest virtue; but they are no longer conscious of a personal God and are no longer drawn to the spiritual ideals of Jesus. They are not as materialistic as they are popularly supposed to be, by any means: their “intellectuals” are all idealists and there is more idealism among the middle classes than there is among like classes in our American cities; but they are thoroughly rationalistic and their ideals and aims are not what an American Christian would call spiritual. They are not concerned about the land of the spirit. They are interested in salvation; they want to see the world saved and they want to save it themselves, but they

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are not thinking of saving the world's soul; they want to save its body and mind. They believe that the Universal Will which is seeking to express itself through them is pushing them out into the world to redeem it, but they expect to redeem it by a Messiah made in Germany—by *Kultur*—by bringing everything in the world—muscle, mind, machinery, soil, society, ethics, government—under the rule of science.

I have not mentioned Germany because there was less Christianity there at the beginning of the war than elsewhere. The fact is there was less elsewhere. There was less in Austria, in Italy, and in Russia, and far less in France. Nowhere on the continent was Christianity, as we understand the term, the dominant religion. Everywhere among the ignorant masses the ruling faith was honeycombed with superstition, while among the intelligent classes almost the only noticeable religion was a godless idealism. Only by the utmost stretch of courtesy could any of the continental peoples be called a Christian people. There were Christians among them, of course, but there are Christians everywhere.

Yet we are told that when Europe came to the verge of war and the power of Christianity to preserve peace was put to the test it utterly and ignominiously failed. Whose Christianity was put to the test? Where was Christianity in evidence? In public sentiment? In the hearts of the rulers? Did the diplomats put Christianity to the test? Was the counsel of the Prince of Peace or any of his

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devoted servants sought in that great crisis? Were the words of the Prince of Peace adopted as a working basis in any of the negotiations? Did the rulers, diplomats, statesmen, soldiers or people show any disposition at any time to submit the case to his arbitration?

### IV

"But certainly something failed." Yes; unquestionably something failed. Some Christians failed. Some of our modern substitutes for Christianity failed. Science, philosophy, culture, statesmanship, diplomacy, materialism, rationalism, modernism, paganism, idealism, all failed. And this is not all. The Christian forces of the world failed. *They failed to mobilize.*

We might as well face the truth. Christianity did not fail in a test but the Christian forces of the world did fail to come to the test. For the thousandth time the Christian forces of the world failed to mobilize.

Christianity is not to blame for this war, but we Christians are. We are to blame for every war between civilized nations that has ever happened since we became strong enough to hold the balance of power in the world. And we became strong enough more than a thousand years ago. There has not been a time in the last thousand years when Christ's followers could not have gotten together and resolved that this world belongs to God; that the divine right of kings and of politicians is a myth; that it is the privilege of men as children of God

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to govern themselves under the supreme sovereignty of God and that therefore it is the duty of men as children of God to see to it that all authority and power is put into the hands of men who recognize both the sovereignty of the people and the supreme sovereignty of God. And if they had resolved they could have carried out their resolution. They could have risen in their might and put every civilized government in the world on a Christian basis. Not on an ecclesiastical basis—the divine right of preachers or priests is no improvement on the divine right of kings,—but a Christian basis. Suppose a little while ago the followers of Christ had suddenly opened their eyes to the truth that a child of God is not an isolated unit but a brother of men. Suppose they had heard the voice of Christ calling them together as a band of brothers and placing upon them the responsibility of winning the world for his kingdom and making his will supreme everywhere. Suppose they had rallied to him with the determination never to rest until the whole world was leavened with his teaching. Would this world-war have been possible? Would any war between civilized nations have been possible? Is it possible to conceive of a war between nations whose rulers and people are dominated by the teaching of Christ?

But this has not been our only blunder. We Christians have not only neglected our privileges as sovereigns and left the government of the world to anybody who might claim the divine right to rule it, but we have allowed the world to come into and govern the church. In our haste to make Chris-

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tianity popular with the world we have not only kept our hands out of its affairs but we have allowed it to put its hands into our affairs. We have made the most fatal of all blunders—the blunder of compromise. And we have made it over and over again. For more than sixteen hundred years compromise has been our besetting sin. We began by compromising with the pagans. We compromised with pagan worship until our worship became more pagan than Christian. We compromised with pagan philosophy until our philosophy became more pagan than Christian. And from the day that we began this unholy flirtation until now, whenever the spiritual power of the church has cooled it has immediately begun to look around for a new compromise. And unlike the burnt child who dreads the fire we have never profited by our terrible experience. The church has suffered more from compromises than from all other evils put together, yet we seem to have made more compromises in the last generation than in any like period since the day of our first great surrender to paganism. We have compromised with wealth, we have compromised with society, we have compromised with a materialistic science. In Europe two generations ago the church fought science with an almost insane ferocity. It utterly refused to be reasoned with. Science, said the church, had not come into the world for any good purpose; science was not the handmaid of religion; religion didn't need a handmaid; science did not come to serve humanity; science was of the devil. It was the mortal enemy of religion and it



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must be destroyed. To-day the church and science are at peace. But see how they got together. Instead of confessing its error and recognizing and welcoming science as a servant, the church, frightened into a panic by its mistake, ran up the white flag and proposed to accept it as its supreme authority. And to-day we have the humiliating spectacle of ministers standing up in Christian pulpits and declaring that where the words of Jesus do not conform to science we must accept science and not Jesus. Only the other day an eminent clergyman, not of Germany, by the way, nor of France, but of England, publicly declared that according to science the teachings of Jesus in regard to peace were wrong and that therefore he was compelled as an intelligent man to follow science and not Jesus!

### V

Yes, we Christians have blundered—blundered miserably. And we have failed—failed a thousand times. But we have failed because of our blunders and not because of our Christianity. Christianity has never yet caused a failure. Nor has Christianity ever failed. Let us keep the record straight. Something has failed; unquestionably something has failed; but not Christianity. There may be something the matter with some churches, there may be something the matter with a great many Christians, but there is nothing the matter with Christianity. Christianity is just as fully alive, just as robust, just as virile, just as vitalizing, just as powerful in every way to-day as it was in the days of Paul. Examine

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it as carefully as you will ; there is no sign of disease, weakness, decay, senility anywhere. The salt has not lost its savour. The leaven has not lost its leavening power. Try it anywhere you will : give it a fair chance, and the salt will save and the leaven will leaven to-day just as it has done in the past. Let a man surrender himself to Christ to-day as completely as men surrendered themselves to him in the days of Paul, and Christ will work as complete a transformation in him as he did in them. The transforming power of Christ is in the world to-day just as it was then.

This is not a matter of opinion : it is a matter of fact which any man with two eyes can determine for himself. I know that in the hurry and turbulence of city life it is easy to overlook everything that is going on in the land of the spirit. "He does not strive nor cry, neither is his voice heard in the street," and it is not strange that those of us who spend our lives in the mad rush and whirl of the crowd should find it difficult to believe that he is still at work in the world. But get away from the noise. Go out to some quiet place where men have time to live and where you can get close enough to them to see and listen to what is going on in their inner lives. And then stop and look and listen ! There is hardly a quiet spot in America to-day where you will not hear the voice of the Master at work in his vineyard. And if you will watch closely you will soon see the leaves shaking where he is at work.

Christ is here. Every day I discover new signs

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of his busy hand in my own neighbourhood. Every day men and women of my own acquaintance are being transformed by his power into his own image. And he is at work in ten thousand other neighbourhoods just as he is in my own. Men will point to the religious statistics of our cities and tell you that Christianity has become a negligible quantity; but if you will go to the country—the great, strong, inexhaustible country that is furnishing these cities with their life blood—I will show you innumerable communities where the teachings and spirit of Christianity have the right of way to-day just as they did in apostolic times; where the people walk with God as their Father and with one another as brothers, eating their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, and where there are thousands of men and women who would lay down their lives for Christ as freely as did the martyrs of old.

### VI

But there is a personal side to this question which we must not overlook. The other day in a message to an apocryphal son, I wrote:

“My son, I like those brave eyes of yours, that firm upper lip, that steady, unflinching step. I think I’ve read you pretty well. You’ve got grit, and you’ve got grip, and you’ve got opinions of your own, and you are unafraid. I don’t believe you are afraid of more than one thing in the world. But, my son, that one thing will make you a coward if you don’t conquer it. For it’s only a shadow, a mere shadow, and you can’t keep brave if you are

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going to have your liver scared white every day by a shadow. You can face a sixteen-inch gun without the flicker of an eyelid: I am sure of it; but just let the Herr Professor stand up and fire his little spitball at your religion, and down you go in a heap. Professor Harzog says that Christianity has collapsed, does he? It's not the collapse of Christianity you need to worry about, my son; it's *your* collapse.

"Suppose, my son, that the Herr Professor had fired at your world of music. Would you have been disquieted? Would it have given you a moment's uneasiness? Wouldn't you have laughed at it? He might have undertaken to prove in fourteen octavo volumes that such a thing as music does not exist and that all its alleged effects are imaginary. Would you have lost a moment's sleep over it? And why not? Why not? Ah! You would have said that the learned professor was a great genius, but he didn't know what he was talking about. And you would have been very charitable about it. You would have said that no doubt he was born without an ear for music, or that at a very early age he had cut himself off from the world of music; that for twenty years he had never been to a concert, never heard a sound from a piano or a violin, and that during all that time the nearest thing to harmony that had fallen upon his ear had been the squeaking of the poor little brutes on which he had been performing his experiments in his laboratory. And you would have said that his sense of music, or the organ that was put into him for the purpose of apprehending music, was utterly atrophied from

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disuse; that therefore, so far as he was concerned, the world of music did not exist, and that it was only natural that he should attempt to prove that it did not exist. And yet, my son, when the Herr Professor gets into one of his rages against religion and proceeds to prove by psychological and historical investigation that there is no such thing as religion and that its alleged effects are all imaginary, you fall before him as you would fall before an angel from heaven, and never stop to think that in all probability the poor fellow at an early age cut himself off from the world of religion; that for twenty years he had never read the Bible, nor prayed, nor given his soul a chance to breathe, nor permitted his aspirations to soar beyond the material world; and that his sense of religion, or the organ that was put into him to enable him to apprehend the spiritual, has therefore become utterly atrophied, and as a consequence, so far as he can see, the spiritual world does not exist at all. Why is this, my son? Why is it that it never occurs to you at such moments that it is human to err and that no man ever became so learned that he ceased to be human; that learning is neither wisdom nor the son of wisdom; that the fact that a man is a scholar doesn't save him from being a fool, and the fact that he is not a fool doesn't save him from saying foolish things; that history is largely a record of the foolishness of the great; that what a scholar who has spent his life outside of the world of religion may think about religion is worth no more than what a scholar who has spent his life outside

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of the world of music may think about music; that it isn't scholarship that gives value to a man's opinions, but first-hand knowledge—like the knowledge that a mother has of love, like the knowledge a loving child of God has of religion? Why, my son, why?

“When I was a boy at college a chum of mine fell in love. I remember how I laughed him to scorn. There was nothing in it, I told him. I was a Soph and I could demonstrate scientifically that it was a mere physical disturbance and there was nothing in it. But a year afterwards, I too fell in love, and all the scientists in the universe couldn't have shaken me from my fond belief that love was the greatest thing in the world. When my chum fell in love I was standing outside of the world of love. Now I was inside. See my point? My son, listen. If you will stop hanging around on the outside of the world of religion; if you will come inside, as I came inside of the world of love; if you will go down on your knees before Christ as I went down before that beautiful girl, and surrender yourself body and mind and soul to him as completely as I surrendered myself to her, and then rise to your feet and go forth as his champion, ready to lay down your life for him—my son, do you suppose you would ever so much as know when the Herr Professor was firing his spitballs at your religion?”

### III

## WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH?

### I

**S**OME people charge it to the automobile. Some charge it to prosperity. Some say that interest in religion moves in waves, and that just at present we are in the trough of the sea instead of on the crest. Whatever it is, it cannot be denied that something has happened. Last year the Church of the Resting Saints, with its magnificent army of a thousand members, did not capture a single soul for Christ. What is the matter?

People have lost interest in Christianity, you say. No, indeed. People may have lost interest in certain things that represent Christianity, but they have not lost interest in Christianity. They may have lost interest in theology, but they have not lost interest in the teachings of Christ. There is a deeper interest in the teachings of Christ to-day than there has ever been since Jesus came into the world. Even the secular press, with all its infirmities, is an ocular demonstration of this fact. Fifty years ago if an editor in some American cities I know had stood up for civic righteousness and called names and fought for the golden rule in business and

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politics as many editors in these same cities are doing to-day, it would have required a battleship to protect him. And he would not have persuaded enough people to subscribe to get out the next issue. The public moral sense was not strong enough to support him. You could not arouse the American public on a great moral question fifty years ago unless you added something to arouse a good deal of bad blood along with it. The moral sense of America is stronger to-day than it was then, because the leaven of Christianity has been steadily working in an ever-widening circle. Go into any public meeting to-day, except a meeting of anarchists or atheists, and you will find it dominated by the teachings of Christianity. Let any man stand up and propose anything that is contrary to those teachings, and unless it is a time of excitement, when men are airing their grievances, the whole house will turn against him. Stop the first dozen workmen you meet. If you are a minister, first leave your clerical garb at home. Let no cross dangle from your watch chain. Leave off your holy tone. Say nothing about the church. Talk with those men about the fundamental teachings of Jesus as they relate to their everyday lives. Use plain, everyday English. Quote no texts. Eleven out of twelve men will listen to you with sympathetic interest, and will want you to talk with them again. Eleven out of twelve will go away feeling that the principles you have given them are the principles that should govern their lives and the lives of their children. The world is not growing tired of the teachings of Jesus.



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The world is feeling the need of the teachings of Jesus to-day as it never felt before.

Nor have the American people as a whole grown tired of the church. Outside of the cities the people generally are as much attached to the church as ever. They feel the need of it as much as ever. They are doing as much for it as ever. The country churches are still furnishing America with the best moral atmosphere in the world. They are still supplying our cities with their strongest and noblest types of Christian manhood. In thousands of small towns and villages and in tens of thousands of country neighbourhoods the church is doing business at the old stand to-day just as it has always done, and nobody ever thinks of asking what is the matter with it. It is true that in some sections we have a so-called country church problem, but in most cases it is the country and not the church that is the problem; the church has declined simply because the country has gone to town.

Taking America as a whole there is no more reason to-day for asking what is the matter with the church than there was a generation ago.

Yet a round thousand automobiles, half of them loaded with churchmembers or ex-churchmembers, passed the church of the Resting Saints last Sunday morning on their way to the country. Does not this show that there is something the matter with the church? No; Resting Saints is a church, but it is not the church. But, you will say, it is a typical church and the same fine scorn which that flying pageant flung at Resting Saints last Sunday was

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simultaneously flung at nine-tenths of the city churches of America.

That is true; still it does not follow that there is something the matter with the church. It does not prove anything as serious as that. But it does show that there is something the matter with nine-tenths of our city churches. And that is serious enough.

### II

What is the matter with our city churches? Let us take a closer look at Resting Saints.

The church is supposed to be an army under the banner of Christ engaged in the conquest of the world for their Leader. It is supposed to do this not by force of arms, but by reaching out the friendly helping hand to every man, woman, and child who is in need of the help that Christ can give. The Church of the Resting Saints is supposed to be one of the strong regiments in this great army. What has this great regiment been doing? For the last ten years thirty or forty of its members have spent an hour a week teaching children in the Sunday-school, most of them children of Resting Saints' members. A dozen women or more have been devoting five hundred dollars' worth of energy each year to devising ways and means to raise a hundred and twenty dollars for foreign missions. About the same number of women have been doing likewise for home missions. A few others have been meeting twice a month to turn an indefinite number of worn-out dresses inside out for the comfort of the

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poor of the church. Still others have been meeting once a month at the parsonage to provide ways and means for a new carpet and to decide, if possible, where the chairs in the parlour shall be set. Five young ladies and four young men go twice a week to a mission chapel for various and sundry duties. An official board, composed of seven active members and a splendid array of honorary pallbearers, meets once a week to talk over the arrears in the pastor's salary, discuss church matters in general, and wrestle with the problem of stopping the latest quarrel in the choir. Of course, there is a young people's society that meets when it does meet, and does a little singing and a good deal of giggling and discusses with pleasant sarcasm the paper which the essayist of the evening left at home in his other coat pocket. And of course there is a live Bible class—a class that is really doing a great work, but which should not be placed to the credit of the church, inasmuch as it pays its own bills, provides its own room, and attends to its own business without any aid, encouragement, indorsement, or recognition from the church of any sort whatever. And of course there are several devout men and women who of their own motion and without the authority of the church have been going out into the highways and hedges and lending a helping hand wherever a helping hand was needed; and this should not be set down to the credit of the church, either. Allowing for duplicates (for nearly all of the teachers in the Sunday-school belong to one or more of the societies I have men-

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tioned), it would be a fair guess that about one hundred of the round thousand members have been engaged in some sort of work for the church, devoting thereto, say, an average of twenty-five minutes a week apiece. The remaining nine hundred have been serving the Lord by attending dress parade at the Sunday morning service, some going every Sunday, some twice a month, and others considerably refraining from going most of the time lest the church should be uncomfortably full.

What has the church of the Resting Saints accomplished in ten years? Ask the Secretary of the official board and he will tell you with pride: "We have had a net gain of one hundred members. Yes, sir!"

Yet, of the new members received, forty odd per cent were children of the congregation, forty per cent brought their letters from churches in other cities, and the remaining odd per cent dropped in at special revival services from nobody knows where. In other words, the Resting Saints regiment of one thousand strong in ten years succeeded in breaking into the non-churchgoing mass and capturing for Christ a fairly good handful of men, women, and children. And of this handful, three were workingmen; the rest were of the sort that Resting Saints usually grades as "nice people." And the three workingmen have since disappeared, and nobody knows where they have gone.

What is the matter with Resting Saints? If we were at war to-day and nine-tenths of our soldiers

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refused to appear in ranks except on dress parade, what would we say was the matter with our army?

### III

Of course there are plenty of good reasons why nine-tenths of the Resting Saints' members never appear in ranks except on dress parade. Some of them are in the church by mistake. They joined under the impression that they were joining a club—a very respectable social club. They wanted to be identified with a nice, clean, moral place where there were plenty of nice, clean, moral people. Others came in with their eyes open and with the best of intentions, but their good intentions faded away long ago and they have forgotten what they came for. Some are staying in for want of energy and courage to leave; others for social reasons, others for business reasons, and many for no reason at all. All are simply camp-followers and they are worth to the church just what camp-followers are worth to an army; no more, no less. The only difference is, the church counts them in the statistics and the army doesn't. Just what the church gains by counting them in the statistics I have never been able to conceive.

And of course there are plenty of good reasons why a church of a hundred real soldiers, hampered and discredited by nine hundred camp-followers, should fail to hold its own, much less make an impression upon the ranks of the enemy.

But how does it happen that the average city church is thus constituted? Why is the membership

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only one-tenth real? Where are our substantial, serious-minded workingmen—the men who despise dress parade and who when they do come into the church come to do things? And what becomes of the millions of young people who are being carefully trained in the Sunday-schools for future service in the church? Where do they go?

Let us go back to Resting Saints. Why has the Church of the Resting Saints failed to reach the workingman?

There are more reasons than one. In the first place it has never gone after them. It has no organization to go after them. All the work that is done by the church is done for the benefit of its own members except the efforts that are made to raise money for foreign missions, home missions, and a little mission in the slums. And the greater part of the work is done by the pastor. There is no organization of any sort designed to reach the great mass of respectable non-church-going workingmen who make up a large part of the city's population. The Church of the Resting Saints does not know officially that there are any workingmen to be saved. The Catholic Church in the neighbourhood has a working force of several priests, dozens of Sisters, and nearly as many Brothers. Resting Saints has its pastor. And a strong, magnificent fellow he is. He could lay off his clerical millinery and go up and down among the shops every day at noon and into the homes of the workingmen at night and in a year win two hundred sturdy men for Christ and the church. But Resting Saints has

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another programme for him—a bell-ringing, bell-answering programme—and by the time he is through attending to as many microscopic duties as Cruden had to attend to in making his Concordance, and for which that unfortunate gentleman had to spend the rest of his life in a lunatic asylum, he is not fit to go to the shops; he can only crawl into bed and soothe himself to sleep praying for deliverance.

In the second place, the Church of the Resting Saints has never put its house in order to receive the workingman if he should come. There are empty pews and to spare, but there is no room for the workingman. Not that he would be turned away if he should come. No, indeed! he would be saluted with perfect politeness by a handsome usher in kid gloves, handed a hymnal and shown to the second empty pew from the rear. And he could sit there in perfect quiet and safety, with no one to molest him or make him afraid, and nobody would see him except two girls four pews ahead who would turn now and then and look at his clothes and turn back again to nudge each other and giggle. Perhaps the preacher in the course of his remarks might say something concerning the dignity of labour, but nothing else would be said or done which he could regard as in any sense personal to himself. And when the services were over, he could slip out quietly and the general appearance of the outpouring congregation would not be marred if he should considerably slip around the corner without waiting on the curb.

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### IV

There are other reasons why the city church is not reaching the workingmen, but I must leave them for another chapter. Then there is that other vast army of the unreached—that magnificent army of young people, all more or less equipped for Christian service, pouring out of the Sunday-school and hurrying on past the church door without so much as turning its head. Why has the city church failed to gather in these young people?

I know a man, a fine looking fellow of ordinary ability but of magnetic personality, who can stand up anywhere in my town and raise his hand and crook his finger and a hundred fathers and mothers will spring forward to do his bidding. Yet that man seldom thinks of fathers and mothers. He passed my house the other day. It was a glorious Sunday afternoon, and people were buzzing about everywhere like bees in June; but he had no eyes for them. He had no eyes for anything except a beautiful streak of sunshine and sweetness that ran by his side up the street toward the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. There were perhaps twelve hundred little girls and boys in that streak, and they were dressed in white, and the little girls wore wreaths of flowers on their heads; and they were all marching, two by two, in a line as straight as an arrow and as even as sewing machine stitches. And there was nothing to keep the line straight and even except the wonderful eyes of the children's priest. You should have seen those eyes as they ran up and down the line; you should



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have seen the love that was in them, the pardonable pride, the strong, quiet confidence. Those eyes told me his secret.

An invisible cord ran out from his heart to every little heart in that procession, and from every little heart ran two cords to the parents at home; and he was drawing them all, children and parents, steadily toward the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, steadily toward the Roman Catholic Church. What care those parents whether the priests come to see them or not? They believe in their children's priest, and they will follow wherever he chooses to lead the lambs of the flock.

We might as well face the truth. Our Catholic friends, strong in the parental instinct and the parental hope, are looking after the lambs of the flock; the average Protestant pastor is still spending the greater part of his time trying to help the old sheep stand on their legs.

I should like to say this to my young friend Jones, who is just beginning his first pastorate. And then, if he should want more, I should like to teach him the art of killing two birds with one stone. I should like to say to him: "There is your honoured predecessor, who wore out his life ringing doorbells. Four times a year for forty years he rang the bell at every house in his parish and inquired after the health of the adult members of his flock. And what was the result? The old sheep died on his hands, and the young lambs skipped away when they saw him coming. There is a better way, my friend. You may win fathers and mothers by going after

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their children, but you are not going to win children by going after the fathers and mothers. Moreover, you may ring a man's doorbell every week in the year and yet fail to find your way to his heart; but if you devote a little time to his boy occasionally, you will win the boy and the father too. And of course you will win the mother. That makes three. Did I say I would teach you the art of killing two birds with one stone? It was a mistake; I should have said three."

Of course Jones would demur and remind me that the church is something more than a Sunday-school and that he had no time to give to the children and all that, but I should be ready for him.

"Let's test the matter," I should say. "Here are twenty homes. Visit these homes four times this year. Yonder are twenty more. There are boys and girls in them all. Don't go near those homes yonder in a whole year—that is, for mere calls that mean nothing. Never mind about your fears; run the risk just for a year. Instead of visiting these people to inquire about their several healths and exchange confidences about the weather, go to the 'phone to-morrow and call up a dozen of their boys and propose to take them on a tramp in the woods in the afternoon. Take the younger boys to-morrow and the older ones one day next week. Plan something for the girls also. Spend two or three afternoons every week with as many boys or girls as you can get along with comfortably. Make yourself one of them; be a good fellow, a chum. Try it for a year. If you are not delighted with the results as

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far as those twenty families are concerned, I will—well, I will be at your mercy. Do you know what will happen? Those children will go home and talk about you. They will say that they like that preacher. They will say that he has sense and knows what he is talking about. They will talk about you at the dinner table, and they will have more to say at supper. They will not let their parents lose sight of the pastor or the Church a single day in the week. And when you go to Sunday-School on Sunday morning your visit, however perfunctory it may seem to you, will mean something. The children will accept it as your indorsement of the school and of their presence; and as the Sundays pass you will notice an ever-increasing sprinkling of young faces in your morning congregation. Moreover, no matter what happens, the fathers and mothers of the children you have been going with will stand by you. And those children are going to stand by you. Wherever they go they will always have an eye open for you. And by and by when they pass out of the Sunday-school they will turn to look for you, and when they see you standing in the church door they will—watch my prediction!—ten to one they will turn in.”

## IV

### WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE PREACHERS?

#### I

**F**ROM the beginning of time the foremost leaders of men have been prophets. The mightiest forces among men have been prophets. The greatest conquerors of ancient times were not warriors but prophets. Buddha went forth alone on foot and empty-handed, yet he won more followers than Alexander conquered with all his armies. Buddha went forth without gold in his purse, or scrip, or two coats, or shoes; and men beholding him said: "There goes a man who has no strings tied to him. He is not bound to anything or anybody, and he can speak without fear. Let us listen to him." And they listened, and they gave to every word its face value. So it has always been: the man to whom the people listen and to whom they surrender their hearts is not the man with the sword, but the man who has no axe to grind. All the money in the world, all the guns in the world, cannot speak with the power of a man who can face his fellow men unafraid because he is neither bound to the world nor bound by it.

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When Jesus went about doing good, men looking upon him said: "There goes a man without a handicap. He has nowhere to lay his head, and he fears not the face of man. He asks for nothing. He speaks his own word or the word he has received from God. He does not back up his words with quotations from the fathers, as the rabbis do. He snaps his fingers at the traditions of the elders. The rabbis have bound us with chains, but he will not let them tie his little finger with a thread. He is free-handed, free-footed, free-hearted and he can tell us the truth. We must listen to him." And they listened. Men listened to Paul not because he was eloquent, but because he came to them with a message from God as foot-loose from the world as an angel from heaven. When a man is not bound to the world men receive him as one who comes from another world. And they listen. They may kill him afterwards but they listen.

This was one of the secrets of the great Wesleyan revival which rescued the eighteenth century from hell. Wesley saw that what the gospel needed was free-handed, free-footed, free-hearted messengers. The church was handicapped with curates who had been appointed to a "living," men burdened with family cares and eating their hearts out with anxiety lest their "living" should prove a starving. He wanted unhampered prophets, men absolutely without a burden save the burden of the word of the Lord; men who had no family, no property, nothing depending upon them; men who could pack their saddlebags in two minutes and report for orders, not

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caring if they were flung to the ends of the earth if they might there find a soul to save.

No man ever made a wiser choice. We know to-day that if an untrammelled prophet like Paul could have been sent to every nation the day after Pentecost, the gospel would have been preached in all the world in twenty years. For when a man is free to go and has the strength to go and God orders him to go, he will go, and the world cannot hire him to stop by the way. Money cannot sidetrack him. An easy berth cannot tempt him. He would not be the liveried hired man of the richest congregation on earth. He is no tramp. He gladly receives his orders from God or the representatives of God; but as a physician of souls he will be guided by the will of God and not by the whims of the sick he is sent to save. He goes to minister to men's needs and he will no more turn aside to minister to their whims than your doctor who comes to save your life can be bribed to devote his time to your amusement.

### II

In ancient times when men turned their thoughts to spiritual things they set such store by their prophets that when they pictured to themselves a desolate land, they pictured it as a land without prophets. But when they turned away to material things, they killed the prophets. It has been so in all ages. Let men think of God, and the man they will listen to with the deepest reverence will be the prophet; let them turn their thoughts to the things

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that are not of God, and they will somehow manage to stop the prophet's mouth. Fifty years ago the man we had the highest regard for, the man we most desired to hear from, was the prophet. We held him in reverence and taught our children to hold him in reverence. We wanted to hear from God, and therefore we wanted him to keep his ear against the thin place in the partition that separates us from the Unseen. We wanted him to live much in his closet; we stood at a distance and watched him with awe as he pored over his Bible. When he stood up in the pulpit we scanned his face carefully to see if he had been with God. We were afraid to trespass upon the time of this man of God lest he should have no message from God. Since then the tide of materialism, of commercialism, of "much business" has come in upon us, and we want to hear from men rather than God. And to-day we are killing the prophets. Some we strangle to death before they come to birth, and many of those who escape we put to death by slow torture.

When I was a boy—and it has not been many years ago—I went to a university that had been built in a secluded place, far away from the maddening crowd. It was under the care of the State, and therefore was not a religious school, though there were devout Christian professors who served as lumps of salt to save it. But it was so far out of the way that the world had not yet found its way to it. The flesh and the devil were there, as they are everywhere else; but the world—that hideous, grasping, self-seeking, cunning thing, eaten through and

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through with commercialism—had not yet reached us. Our best teachers held up before us the highest and best things, the things that endure. First of all, a man must be a man. He must be ashamed to be a mere money-maker. We were taught that it was better to be a ditcher with a high ideal than a world winner with a low one. The Man who had not wherewith to lay his head was the peerless pattern for all men for all time. Success in life did not mean making a million or getting before the footlights. If we would be men, we must give utterance to the manhood that is in us. If we did that, whether by building a railroad or writing a poem or going to the Senate or serving a country church, we would be men; and if each of us put into our work the best that was in us, the poet and the country parson would never suffer by comparison with the railroad president and the United States Senator. I need not tell you that if a young man went into that university a poet, he came out a poet; if he went there burning with the spirit of a prophet, he came out a prophet; if he went there consecrated to the cause of education, he came out an educator; and if he went there with the ambition to get rich, he came out ashamed to tell anybody what his ambition was.

Since that day the spirit of the world—materialism, commercialism, much business, call it what you will—has permeated the whole land like a poisonous gas; and in many a college the highest ideals, the only ideals that belong there, have succumbed to it. Let a young man to-day go to a college that



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is not absolutely dominated by the highest type of Christian manhood, and however high and pure his aspirations may be, the chances are that he will come out with his wagon hitched to the star of much business. Let him go with the ambition to be a physician, with the high ideals of a Dr. Maclure, and he will come out with the intention of being a doctor with an eye to business. Let him go with the ambition to be a Christian lawyer, and he will come out with the intention of being a lawyer for the main chance. Let him go with the ambition to be a poet, and he will come out to manufacture fertilizers. Let him go with a heart on fire to be a prophet of God, and the chances are he will come out with an eye to a professional career as a city pastor, with special reference to a city pastor's salary and perquisites. The college that is not dominated by a Christian spirit strangles our prophets before they can come to birth.

But what of the few that escape? And what of those who come from truly Christian schools?

### III

Let us take a little walk among the tombs of the prophets. We have often strolled down the beautiful avenue yonder and strengthened our hearts with grateful memories of noble men whose ashes lie on either side—brave, hard-working men who literally wore out their lives in the Master's service. But let us turn to the left just here. Look at the inscription on the arch just above you. "Thou that killest the prophets." You think it strange that you should

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never have noticed that inscription before, but hardly anybody seems to see it. It is not pleasant to think about, but every prophet buried in this section was put to death. Yes, put to death. And their tombs, you will notice, are not ancient, either; they all belong to our own time, and the names, you see, are all American.

Notice this tomb. This young prophet was killed at the seminary. Poor fellow! He had never preached a sermon except to the little country congregations that were served by the seminary students. He went to a modernized college where he had a hard struggle holding on to his faith, and I have been told that when he left he was very happy at the thought that his religious struggles were at last over and that he would spend the next three years in a nest as safe as his own home and that in its gracious warmth his spiritual nature would quickly recover from the long freeze to which it had been subjected. But alas! he had not been at the seminary a month before he discovered that the difference between the two places was mainly a matter of profession. His college didn't profess to be a religious institution, and the seminary did. In spirit, in ideals, and in methods, they were practically the same.

Some years ago a brilliant young fellow whose spirit had suffered atrophy in the barren intellectualism of a German university came to the seminary and took the chair of Old Testament history. He was one of those icy fellows who are trained to think only in terms of materialistic science, and his

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sole aim seemed to be to destroy all old faiths in general and all belief in the spiritual or supernatural in particular. Like a great many other brilliant fellows who get elected to a professorship before their judgment has been developed by contact with life, he was victimized by the illusion that the sun never rose until the present generation of scholars came upon the stage, and the chief joy of his life was to pour contempt upon all the riches of wisdom inherited from the past and to convince his students that nothing which had come down from the past—whether the Bible or the Christian religion or anything else treasured by mankind—was what our fathers had supposed it to be. The young prophet soon came under his influence and for three years he read his Bible in an atmosphere that was utterly hostile to it as the inspired Word of God. For three years he prayed in an atmosphere that was almost prayerless. For three years he saw the Bible treated as a literary patch quilt in course of renovation, heard Christ spoken of as if he were yet an unidentified being, and bowed in worship with men who regarded God as a sort of impersonal gracious influence like balmy spring air. For three years he heard the ministry spoken of merely as an opportunity for a brilliant career, as a profession which offered many attractions to young men of intellectual aspirations, good social qualifications, and student habits. For three years. And then the natural thing happened: the prophet inside of him just lay down and died—died of starvation. Pitiful, wasn't it! But let us pass on.

## IV

This—let me see—yes, this is the tomb of a prophet who was killed by the rich Pharisee that sits in the Amen Corner. He was a noble young fellow, from all accounts, the most promising young man in town, everybody said. His call had come to him in the old way. It was as clear as a bell, as distinct as the voice he used to hear when a child calling him at dawn: "Up, my son; time to rise, my boy."

And it was the voice of God. Not of ambition, not of duty, not of the people, not of the eternal fitness of things, but of God. It thrilled him to his finger tips. It fired him to the depths of his soul. He bowed his head in awe. He laid his hand upon his mouth and went softly.

While he was preparing to go he kept his soul in a flame with memories of the deeds of the prophets of old. The Book of Martyrs was his joy. He devoured greedily the stories of the penniless pioneer preachers who mounted their ponies with the hunger of mighty hunters in their eyes and plunged into the wilderness in search of souls. Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett dropped off their pedestals in his heart and crashed down on their faces before these mightier heroes. He dreamed of the day when with heart aflame he should start out as brave and empty-handed as Jesse Lee or Francis Asbury and plunge through fire and flood to find a soul for God. He wanted nothing for himself, but he had the thirst of a diamond hunter for gems for Jehovah's crown.

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And he courted martyrdom. He lusted for hardship.

His first appointment was a far-away mountain mission. It was in a famous moonshine district of which knowing ones in those days told many marvellous and terrible tales. Behind every charming vision of rhododendron on the mountain side, the knowing ones said, crouched a hunted fugitive with rifle in hand waiting for vengeance. The young prophet invaded the land without funds and without fear. He went in the spirit of Elijah and of Paul. There were a round dozen little churches hidden away here and there amid the coves, and often he had to climb up through great tribulations to reach them. He had never learned to ride horseback, but he swam his pony through swollen rivers with his arms clasped desperately about her neck. He was a white-faced sufferer, always in the grip of the neuralgia fiend; yet he would struggle through fierce, cutting blizzards from daylight until noon to reach an appointment when he knew that not a soul would be there to meet him. He was as frail as a delicate woman; yet he fought many a battle against sin alone when he had to contend with men whose favourite argument were bullets. He fought until he won; and then he put his arms about the necks of the grizzly old sinners and led them to Christ and sent them back home shouting for God.

He went away at the end of the year with a face disfigured by pain but transfigured by the joy of conquest and the light of heaven. He descended from the mountains to a sleepy little village church

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in the valley. He went praying for new conquests. The little church was owned body and soul by the patriarch and ruler of the village. This good man was known to his faithful subjects as Uncle Tommy. Uncle Tommy was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and a love of power in his heart. Also in the same bosom were hidden great stores of the milk of human kindness. He grew up to feel that he was responsible for the welfare as well as the conduct of the entire village. He owned most of the property and all the people in sight. Not a man lifted up his hand or foot in all the land without Uncle Tommy. Yet he was the humblest of men. He was proud of nothing save his humility.

You cannot resist an humble man who is always doing something for you, and for twenty years Uncle Tommy had gently led the preacher and the community round by the nose without a protest from either. When the conquering prophet descended from the mountains, the patriarch met him and took him to his home. He led him to the prophet's room and told him to unpack his things and get his sermon ready and to leave the rest to him. He would see that everything was attended to and full information and instructions would be forthcoming in due time. The next morning he took the prophet to church, deposited him safely in the pulpit, told him it was time to begin, and after looking carefully over the congregation, took his seat in the amen corner, where he could exercise a fatherly oversight over the young preacher with one eye and over his faithful subjects with the other.

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Just what the prophet did that hour he never knew. It had been his custom on announcing his text to pause a moment until he could become conscious of the All-Seeing Eye looking upon him; but when the time for the pause came, his face burned with the consciousness that Uncle Tommy's eye was upon him. He could think of no other eye. Yet when the sermon was over that good man was kind enough to rise and inform the congregation that the young brother had made a good start under the circumstances, and that it was the duty of the people, one and all, to rally around him and hold up his hands.

On the way home he was told what points in his sermon were especially acceptable to the people and what points were not quite so acceptable as some others, and what points might have been a little less pointed. That afternoon when dinner was over the promised information in regard to the condition of the church and instructions as to the course the young pastor should pursue in the premises were given with great particularity and liberality. "Our church," he was informed, was a little peculiar—just a little—and the conduct of its affairs called for the wisdom of a serpent and the harmlessness of a dove, especially the harmlessness of a dove. "Our people" were not all of one class and did not agree on all points, and things that could be safely said through a trumpet in other places could not be even whispered in Sleepyville. Of course, things were not what they might be, and a young prophet with more zeal than knowledge might be tempted to

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pull off his coat and create a disturbance, which would be a great calamity—an unspeakable calamity. But wisdom always calls for caution—great caution—and it would be best to go slowly, and at any rate steer clear of difficulties, and just confine one's self to the plain, simple gospel and leave the rest to Providence—to Providence and Uncle Tommy. Uncle Tommy would look out for things and suggest—merely suggest—the safest course to pursue, and let him know when the people were not satisfied; and if he continued through the year with these precautions in mind—remembering especially the harmlessness of a dove—no doubt everything would move along smoothly and he would go to Conference at the end of the year in good shape, with most of the collections in full. “And by the way,” said Uncle Tommy, “we always begin the night service at 7:45 sharp. I'm a great stickler for promptness, and I'll call for you at exactly 7:35.”

When the prophet came home from church that night he threw himself on his bed and buried his face in his pillow like a woman. He had intended that those first two sermons should be two great trumpet blasts, and he had preached like the Rev. Meek Little Lamb! And now he was burning with mingled shame and indignation. He had not merely failed to preach—that was a small matter; he had failed to be a man—failed to be God's man. When he thought of God he felt like a culprit. By and by the cock crew, and he thought of Peter. He who had renounced the world and laid himself on God's



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altar to be God's man, to do God's bidding, to preach the word God gave him, had actually stood like a foolish beast and allowed a mere man to come up and pat him on the head and put a bit in his mouth and lead him whither he would! He had disgraced himself, and Uncle Tommy was to blame for it. "I won't stand it!" he cried. "I'll tell him to his face to-morrow that I recognize but one Master, and I'll not be the slave of any man."

But when to-morrow came his courage failed him. He could no more look into that benevolent face and say the things he intended to say than he could scold a dying saint. That night when he went down on his knees before God the voice of the prophet within sounded like the cry of a little child smothered beneath a heavy blanket. He noticed it, and when he rose to his feet he threw himself on his bed for another bitter struggle. But the next day his courage failed him again. How could he resist Uncle Tommy when Uncle Tommy was the church, and when Uncle Tommy loved the church and loved him? And the next Sunday night it was the same, and the next, and the next, until one dreary midnight after a long, weary struggle the poor prophet within gasped and died, and the next day the Rev. What-Was-Left settled down without a protest in Uncle Tommy's service, Uncle Tommy being the church; to go when Uncle Tommy said go and come when Uncle Tommy said come; to begin at 7:45 sharp and end when Uncle Tommy looked at his watch and cleared his throat twice; to visit the Joneses three times as often as the

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Smiths, because Uncle Tommy said the Joneses were important when it came to the round up in the collections; to avoid all reference to the prohibition question, because Uncle Tommy was afraid Brother Jeremiah Simpkins would refuse to pay his quarter-age; to preach mainly on comforting subjects, because it always had such a delightful effect on Uncle Tommy's spirits and made him extraordinarily agreeable and complimentary at the dinner table; also to sneeze with alacrity whenever Uncle Tommy took snuff; and to see that all other things were done or left undone in accordance with Uncle Tommy's word.

Uncle Tommy—blessed soul! there never was a better—died the next summer and went to heaven; but the dead prophet never revived, and the Rev. What-Was-Left went forth from Sleepyville at the end of the year, not as the victorious prophet who came to it at the beginning thirsting for new conquests, but as a hired man when his time is up goes forth to seek an easier job.

But let us pass on.

### v

Over in this corner you will notice that the inscriptions are all very much alike. All these prophets were put to death by their own congregations. Notice that tomb there, just at your right. I knew that young man. When he started out I thought he would burn up with zeal. When he went to his first city pastorate he was possessed with the idea that he was God's servant sent to deliver God's

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message, and that what the world called his salary was simply the offering of God's people laid on God's altar to meet the expenses of God's man who had been set apart from the ordinary occupations of life that he might the more clearly hear and the more effectively deliver God's message to men. Within a month he awoke to the cold fact that a great majority of his people had an entirely different understanding of the matter, and that they were possessed with the idea that he was their man whom they had hired to do their bidding, and it did not take him another month to find out that it was not their intention that he should devote himself to God as a bearer of messages to his people, but that he should devote himself to answering such calls as his employers and the community generally should make upon him. He was reminded that the day of the hermit was passed, and that if a pastor wanted to accomplish anything he must leave his study and get out among the people. And he must get out among the people not for the purpose of carrying God's message to them, for that would drive the people away, but for the purpose of drawing the people to their church, and especially nice people, and more especially nice people who had enough money to help share the financial burdens of the church. The poor fellow took his disappointment and perplexity to God; and while he was praying the telephone rang and Mrs. Smith wanted to know when she could see him about some things that came up at the Aid Society meeting yesterday. He tried to talk with God again, and he remembered there was a lady

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waiting in the parlour to get a recommendation that would help her sell a new kind of glue to the members of his congregation. He gave up praying and tried to study, and the telephone bell and the doorbell between them cut his studies into forty semi-quavers, more or less, before noon. Then the lunch hour came, and when that was over he had to get out and ring some doorbells himself. He rang eighteen bells that afternoon, and thought he was doing pretty well until he met another pastor—an old hand at the business—on his way home, and learned that he rang twenty-six; and for the next six months he ran himself into near neurasthenia every day trying to reach the old pastor's high watermark. He wondered how ringing doorbells and inquiring after the health of the several ladies who came into the parlour could be of any service either to his people, to the Lord, or to himself; but he had been warned that though he might speak with the tongues of men and of angels and had not this bell-ringing grace, it would profit him nothing. And so the days passed, and every day it was the same. In the afternoon he was

*“ Keeping time, time, time  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the throbbing of the bells,  
Of the bells, bells, bells.”*

And in the morning as he sat in his study it was

*“ O the bells, bells, bells!  
What a tale their terror tells  
Of despair!”*

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And after a week of this sort of thing, he would take his poor addled, fevered brain up to his study late Saturday night and ask God to cool it off for him and please give him a few ideas for the next day's two sermons. And the next morning he was expected to stand up in his pulpit in the presence of a congregation that had cultivated the art of appearing to listen without hearing a word, and in twenty-five minutes preach a sermon that would cause all the visitors to stop and shake hands with the deacons and tell them that Spurgeon in his palmiest days never came up to it. As if a man could preach a great sermon in twenty-five minutes under any circumstances! As if a man could preach any sort of sermon worth listening to after a week of such jangling and turbulency!

So day by day the cord tightened about the throat of the prophet within the pastor, and the prophet struggled and gasped for breath, and at last one day he died. And behold what was left! The ever popular Rev. Hail Fellow Well Met, well known to all readers of the Society Column as Mr. Knickerbocker's constant companion at golf, the charming essayist at the woman's club, and our best local authority on the drama. The reverend doctor is also popular as a baseball fan and it is said among his friends that he can slap more good fellows on the back and take more soft drinks with the "boys" at the soda fountain downtown than any three clergymen in the city!

You look into the face of this popular doctor to-day as he stands in the pulpit after a week of

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“good fellowship” with the world in accordance with the rules laid down by the society members of his congregation, and you think of Moses coming down the mountain with his face shining like the face of an angel; of Elijah standing before Ahab; of John the Baptist, Paul, Martin Luther, and John Wesley; and you ask yourself: “Is it possible that God ever intrusted a message for dying sinners to a man like that?” You cannot believe that he did. You do not want a man like that to bring you a message from God. Moses and Elijah and John and Paul and Luther and Wesley made men think of God. That was what they were sent for, and that is what every prophet of God is sent for; and that man does not make you think of God. No Rev. Hail Fellow Well Met, who spends half his time ringing doorbells, and “doing the society act,” and the other half slapping men on the back and calling them clever dogs, ever makes men think of God.

We have run this thing of getting close to the people to save them into the ground. Jesus got close to men that he might touch them and heal them; he did not get close to them that he might slap them on the back and call them clever dogs. The world is to be saved by the Christ-touch, not by the jolly, good-fellow slap. We don't need jolly good fellows in the ministry. We need prophets—men set apart from the jolly crowd; men set apart unto God; men who stay in the presence of God until their faces are white with the light of God, and who hasten with his message to their fellow men while the light is still on their faces and the

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fire is still burning hot in their hearts; men whose minds are rid of all things but the task of carrying God's message to their fellow men; men who can go among their fellows as Jesus did, touch them with the Christ touch, and go back to their closets without the smell of the world upon their garments.

And every true preacher will say amen. For nobody knows this so well as the preachers themselves. Nobody else can conceive of what a faithful pastor suffers in his struggle to keep the thoughtless demands of his people from suffocating the prophet within his bosom. You have never looked in upon your pastor in his study in the dead hours of a Saturday night after a week of distracting grind. You have never seen him drop his fevered head on his desk and heard him moan: "Who will deliver me from the body of this death?"

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." Such a famine is upon us, but it is not of the Lord's sending; it is of our own making. It is not because the Lord has not given us prophets that there is a scarcity of the word of the Lord; it is because we kill so many of the prophets that are sent to us.

## V

### WHY DO OUR COLLEGES TURN OUT SO MANY UNBELIEVERS?

#### I

**T**HERE are presidents of little colleges all over the land who will rise flush-faced to a question of personal privilege and affirm with commendable ardour that there is not a word of truth in it. I might as well say at the beginning that so far as most of the little colleges are concerned I do not believe that there is a word of truth in it. No doubt most of them are doing their work as nobly as ever and not a few are turning out more Christians than ever. But the question as it is usually asked does not refer to the smaller institutions. When people want to know what is the matter with our colleges they are not thinking of the little church schools (which have never had any serious complaint except an incurable poverty), but of the big endowed institutions—the big colleges and universities which occupy the centre of the stage and which for the last generation and more have been pressing the little colleges steadily back into the background and on beyond the hill to the poor-house.



Why are the big colleges and universities turning out so many unbelievers?

Of course I know that there have been times when more unbelievers came out of our big educational institutions than are coming out to-day. A little more than a hundred years ago when French atheism and deism were sweeping over the land hardly one American college student in fifty was willing to be known as a Christian. But that was only an epidemic. The students caught it from current literature and the colleges were no more responsible for it than they were for the measles and smallpox of the period. I also know that the Young Men's Christian Associations stand ready to prove that there is ten times as much organized Christian activity in the colleges to-day as there was a generation ago. But this is of no great significance. One might conclude from the rapid increase of the number of automobiles at the colleges that there has been a corresponding increase in extravagance among college students; but the fact that college students own five times as many automobiles as they did a little while ago does not prove that they are five times as extravagant to-day as they were then: it only proves that extravagance among them is expressing itself in the purchase of automobiles five times more than it did then. So the fact that there is ten times as much organized Christian activity in the colleges to-day as there was a generation ago does not prove that there is ten times as much Christianity in the colleges as there was then, but only that Christianity in the colleges is expressing

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itself in organized activity ten times more than it did then. Reason about it as we may we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that of the vast army of young men who go off to our big colleges and universities carrying in their hearts the simple faith of the fathers, only a small number comes back with a faith that is sufficiently substantial to be of any practical value in life. And the same is true, though in a less degree, of our young women. This fact does not rest upon statistics or mere opinion; it is a matter of common knowledge among all who are interesting themselves in the spiritual problems of our educated young men and women.

What is the matter with our colleges?

### II

Funny things will happen. Sometimes at a funeral something occurs that is so ludicrous that we can hardly bury our dead; and since this horrible war began so many amusing things have happened that we who play the part of watchmen on the tower have hardly been able to keep our faces straight long enough to screw our mouths to our trumpets. For instance, there are those Metropolitan Grand Opera Concerts of Vituperation Against German Philosophy that have been given every week since the war began by our national company of all-star divines. Are you old enough to remember that for at least twenty years before the war began fully half of this distinguished company lay on their ponderous stomachs before the very idol they are now so eloquently abusing, rooting their noses in the ground

in the most abject worship ever indulged in by mortal man? All the same it is true. For twenty years and more some of the most furious trumpeters in this thundering chorus never had a thought and never wanted a thought that did not come from Germany or did not have the stamp of Germany's approval upon it.

And then there is that mysterious panic—that unaccountable frenzy that precipitated our campaign for preparedness. Now I am not saying anything about preparedness, nor am I saying one word against those good people who have honestly scared themselves into the belief that whoever wins out in Europe will come over here and conquer something. But look for a moment, if you please, upon this spectacle. Run your eye through this great chorus of chief rooters for preparedness and notice some of these patriots in cap and gown and in ecclesiastical robes. What were these great leaders of America's intellectual and spiritual forces, these appointed guardians of the land of the spirit, doing twenty years ago? Ten years ago? Five years ago? Some of them were patriots then—American patriots—fighting for American ideals—fighting to defend, not a few feet of sordid earth, but America's whole land of the spirit—our only true wealth and only glory. But the others—what were they doing?

How did it happen that that great army of scientific, materialistic, mechanistic, or other-istic ideas and ideals which began to land on our shores from the continent of Europe more than a generation ago

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was able to make its way almost unobserved to every part of our country and under cover of darkness take possession of fully two-thirds of all of our great intellectual and spiritual strongholds without firing a gun? Who can help smiling at the furious trumpetings of some of these guardians of our spiritual possessions in their anxiety to work us up to a frenzy over the possibility of an invasion that may one day threaten our soil, when everybody knows that for a score of years or more they have been giving aid and comfort to the enemy in an actual invasion that has been threatening, not America's soil, but America's soul, and that has been daily laying waste the land of the spirit under their very noses?

Yes, it is hard to keep one's face straight nowadays, even in the midst of this great world funeral and its horror of great darkness.

I don't know whether America will ever be invaded by armed men again or not. I am no war prophet; and if I were, the opinion of a war prophet is not worth the paper it is written on these days. But I cannot feel any great concern about this possible peril of the dim future to American soil in the face of our present peril—the peril which threatens America's soul—this terrifying European materialistic machine that has been moving straight on over our educational, informational, and inspirational strongholds—our colleges, our universities, even some of our pulpits and presses—everywhere displacing the American tradition, everywhere rooting out the high spiritual ideals that made America

a nation of *men*, and putting in their places ideals of education and life that suffocate our men before they can come to birth and at best can only make us an aggregation of machines.

III

We are given to saying that the biggest thing the fathers of this republic ever did for us was to conceive and set going the American idea of democracy. Not the idea of democracy, but the American idea of democracy. But this American idea of democracy was inspired by a wonderful vision of manhood, and it would have died almost at birth if our forefathers had not also conceived the American educational ideal, which made it possible to keep this vision of manhood before our eyes and to realize it.

It was the old-time Christian conception of the exalted character of man that made us a democracy. So long as the world looked upon men as machines or animals with thinking-machine attachments, men were ruled by a power from without. Our fathers in their simplicity bound their hearts and the fortunes of this republic to the primitive Christian idea that a man is a spirit having a body, an immortal being of vast spiritual possibilities. They looked upon their growing sons as the future spiritual forces of America—forces sent to work out with God and their fellow men the great purpose of God in the establishment of this republic. Naturally, therefore, when they began to think of providing means for the education of their children, they conceived the

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idea that a college should be a place for the making of men—not machines, not animals with thinking-machine attachments, but men—immortal spiritual forces, sons of God with eyes to see the hand of God and hearts to fall in with the purpose of God for the uplift of their fellow men. And so, when they began to build they did not begin with laboratories. They did not begin with machine-made buildings built to house machines for the making of more machines. They did not paper their lecture rooms with gold bonds as an inspiring reminder to their sons of what machines could do. All they thought of was to get their boys and a few men—real men—together and keep them together until their boys learned what real men were and ached to become real men themselves and got inspired and set to work and somehow or other got to be men. Therefore they began, not with great “plants,” but with shelters.

Take the case of—well, let us call it Whitesworth. Whitesworth was built back in those simple days by plain-thinking, God-fearing men who were simple enough to believe that man is essentially a spirit and that unless the spirit is provided for the mind and body are not worth their keep. That is why the fathers of the republic were brave enough to build colleges on faith and endow them with nothing more substantial than ideals. Men who imagine that their sons are immortal spirits do not find it difficult to conceive that a college can be a college even when its walls have not been papered with five per cent bonds.

There were strange-thinking folk in the land in those days.

"Brethren," said Timothy Whitesworth (that was not his name but it will do), when that good but eccentric man rose to state the object of the meeting at which the college destined to bear his name was called into being—"brethren, the permanence of our new republic depends upon the strength of her sons."

And all the brethren said, "Amen."

It was on a snowy day in December in the year of our Lord seventeen hundred and ninety-two.

"And the strength of our sons," continued Timothy, "depends not so much upon what we do for their bodies or even for their minds as upon what we do for their moral and spiritual natures."

And again the brethren said, "Amen."

"Then," cried the grim old patriot, bringing his fist down hard upon the little deal table at his side, "if these be our sentiments, let us be true to them, and let us here and now for the glory of God and the good of our young republic resolve to erect in this secluded spot a hall of learning where our youth may come to maturity in a spiritual atmosphere, in the presence of exalted spiritual ideals, and in daily contact with great teachers who shall be the highest types of manhood, the ripest fruits available of the high ideals for which we stand!"

And then and there the little band of brave men, heroes of God who had come together at the little meeting house at the foot of the mountain at the old

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man's call, resolved to lay themselves and all they had on the altar of God and of the republic for the purpose of fulfilling the great vision with which their leader had fired their hearts. They had no money, but they had land; and when spring came they planted more acres than they had ever planted before, and when the harvest was over they came together and built a great hollow square of brick up to the third story. Then they waited until they could make another crop, and then they ran it up another story and covered it in. And then they made another crop. And thus they went on toiling and stinting and begging and praying until they had laid the floors and put in the partitions and the windows and hung the doors and furnished half the rooms with good, strong deal tables and benches. And then one glad day in June they came together and praised the Lord and humbly dedicated the rude work of their hands to Almighty God, and elected a president, a man after their own heart, and sent him out to seek teachers who should be found worthy to mould their sons according to the ideals which Timothy Whitesworth had set before them. And the president found them. Scholars they were, but scholars who were versed first in the sacred mysteries of manhood and next in Greek and Latin and mathematics and philosophy; true men and strong, who cared not for dollars, because they had learned that life consisteth not in the abundance of them; capable men—men who could close their books on a moment's notice and lead their students forth, if need be, to make a crop or repel the British or carry



to the mountaineers round about the gospel of peace and good will to men.

And then the doors were opened, and the youth of the land came and sat at the feet of these patterns and makers of men, and they grew up to manhood and went forth and became the leaders and builders of the nation. Some became statesmen and some teachers, and here and there blossomed forth a poet; and some became leaders of industry whose names were known among men, but only as synonyms of integrity and honour.

Go in any direction you will over any of these thirteen original States, and you will not go far before you will stumble upon one of these primitive shelters—a rude, ivy-covered pile standing like an ancient sentinel on the outskirts of some prosperous-looking modernized campus—that still testifies in every wall, in almost every brick, to the emphasis which our fathers laid upon this simple but wonderful educational ideal to which they looked, next to God, to work out the salvation of this republic. Let no one imagine that those crude walls of learning were conceived in stinginess or that they were built cheaply because their builders had a cheap idea of education. There is not a modern university plant in America that cost as much as the smallest of these primitive structures. There are bricks in yonder old moss-covered wall that were made by men whose hands we are not worthy to shake. The first tiers of that wall were laid by an honoured father of this republic. Those windows came from the proceeds of the sale of treasured jewels which a

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woman who had no boy of her own laid on God's altar for the education of other people's boys for God's service. Another woman took in sewing to pay for the doors. A gentleman of culture hewed out the rude benches in yonder lecture room with his own hands. On the moss-covered stones in the little ancient graveyard beneath the tangle of vines back of the campus you will find the names of men who spent whole years of their forgotten lives digging, sweating, stinting, and starving that their State might not lack a place for the making of the men who would be needed to carry out God's purpose in the land through the generations to come.

Think you that our forefathers and foremothers would have given out of their penury and worked their fingers to the bone to construct a "plant" in order that America might be provided with machine men to run the machinery which it would one day learn to make? Think you that they would have laid their best on the altar of education if they had conceived the idea that education meant nothing more than the scientific training of the brains and eyes and hands of creatures who differ from animals only in being provided with thinking-machine attachments?

Am I talking against endowed colleges? No. We need endowed colleges. I want to see every college in America that is an American college provided with every dollar it can use. But I would first see to it that it is an American college—that is, a college first of all endowed with the American educational ideal, which is the Christian ideal, and

is engaged in the making of men—men according to Christ's idea and not according to the idea that has invaded America from the big machine universities across the sea.

### IV

Were the fathers of this republic wise in their building?

There are no statistics to appeal to in a matter of this sort, and probably if there were we would not get the right meaning out of them—we seldom do—but it is an easy guess that at no time in the history of mankind has any nation turned out anything like as many men—cultured, strong, all-round, worthwhile men—as America produced during the first hundred years of its existence as a republic. Why, we had more men—more great intellectual and spiritual forces fitted for leadership—than we knew what to do with. The whole country was overstocked with men. Not only were the professions crowded as they are to-day, but they were crowded at the top. I have in mind at this moment a backward State—known to the unappreciative as a backwoods State, known to the world at large as only a spot on the map—which at one time could have creditably filled and kept filled the presidential chair, every seat in the Cabinet, and the entire Supreme Court Bench. For nearly a hundred years our poor little colleges, with no endowment except ideals and no equipment except men—American men fired with American ideals—stood by their job so faithfully and did their work so well that such a thing as a

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dearth of men for positions of great responsibility was never heard of. There was always a lack of machine men—the kind of men we have learned to make since we have learned to make machines and needed machine men to run them, but there was never a dearth of *Men!*

Did they build wisely?

The other day somebody called attention to the fact that our great modern educational institutions, plentiful as they are, tremendous as they are, with all their vast equipment and wealth, are not turning out enough men—capable men—to meet their own needs. There has hardly been a time in twenty years when half a dozen or a dozen colleges were not scouring the country in a desperate search for somebody big enough to preside over them.

Do I mean to say that we have fallen into this pitiable state because we have departed from the ways of our fathers who built wisely when they built twenty-thousand-dollar "halls of learning" and have unwisely gone to building ten-million-dollar "plants"? No. I don't think we need ten-million-dollar plants; but we need plants, and perhaps we need a few ten-million-dollar endowments. Some of our big universities don't need half the money they think they do, but the average university or college needs far more than it is getting. If it is a church school, you may set it down that it needs vastly more than it is getting. Once in a while I have heard of a church school that was blighted by gold; but it was blighted by the gold it was after, not the gold it had.

No, it is not because we have departed from the ways of our fathers.

It is not that.

### V

It was such a simple matter to make men so long as our American colleges were run on the American plan, and we were content to make Americans for America. It just worked out naturally. When Boy went to college in those days, he found himself in a big home in the presence of half a dozen or a dozen splendid men—great, big, strong, all-round men—men of culture and personality; men who exuded character; men who filled the atmosphere all around them with something that came from the land of the spirit—something that made Boy walk softly; something that awakened in him a yearning that would never, never be satisfied until he too became a man. One of these men was professor of Greek and another of Latin and another of mathematics and another of chemistry, and so on; but there was one chair—the biggest chair of all—which they shared in common: they were all professors of Applied Manhood. There was not a man among them who had not consecrated himself to the business of making men, and most of them were trying to make them after a pattern that God himself had shown them in the mount—the Man of Galilee. And when Boy came among them, they came to him. They got close up to him. There were not more than twenty-five boys to a professor, and every professor made it his business to get close to as many

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boys as he could. And every boy had the benefit of a personality. The other day I asked a university student about some of his professors. I might as well have asked him about the English House of Lords. He could not claim a single friend among them; most of them he knew by reputation only. Fifty years ago if a boy at college didn't have a bosom friend among the professors it was because the professors could not help themselves. Every boy lived in the presence of one or more splendid personalities. Every boy had a friend to whom he could open his heart down to his last secret. Every boy breathed an atmosphere that set every fibre of his being throbbing with ambition to be a man—a great spiritual force in the world.

In those days a boy had a hard time escaping manhood.

We really thought that we were doing very well. Our colleges were not only making men of the boys who came to them, but they were inspiring thousands of boys at home who could not come. Every college was a magnetic Personality that could reach out for a hundred miles or so and take hold of a poor boy and lay him down on his stomach with a book before a lightwood fire at night and start him in the business of making a man of himself. It was the biggest University Extension movement this country ever saw.

We thought we were doing very well until we began to get rich enough to send our boys off to Europe for a university course and those boys began to come back, as a great many American globe-

trotters have been coming back ever since, to tell us that they had discovered that the sun rises and sets in Europe and all that America can boast of is the faint occasional glimmer of a wandering firefly. Talk about education—we didn't even know what education meant! To know what education means one must go to Germany. And then the Great Invasion began—the biggest peril that America has ever known and, let us hope, will ever know.

### VI

One day a brilliant young fellow, a product of the new awakening, stood up before the trustees at Whitesworth and said: "We are fifty years behind the times. We must wake up or our days are numbered. Education is the prerogative of science, not of religion. Religion may run an institution on air and in the air, but science must have laboratories and up-to-date equipment and better surroundings, and therefore gold and much gold and more gold. It was well enough for a church to conduct a college in the days of our poverty, but the church is poor and can give only thousands where the world can give its millions; therefore the church must vacate and make room for the world. For the friend that education needs most is gold. And we must have gold—gold and much gold and more gold." And before the dear old foggy-trustees had time to find out what the young man meant, mammon had stolen their sacred trust from beneath their very eyes and had proceeded to secu-

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larize the institution in conformity with its materialistic ideals.

It was not an alarming matter at the start. The good old trustees listened to the brilliant young fellow and rubbed their eyes and said: "Well, probably you are right. We didn't think we knew much anyway, and you have been out in the world and you ought to know. Anyway, we will let you take the job and see what you can do." And then young Professor Sophocles took the chair and with a quiet smile said: "Gentlemen, we are ready for business. The first thing we want to do is to turn out these old mossback professors."

"Do you know," said an eminent lawyer to me the other day, "the man at the university who did more for me than all the rest put together was Old Ran." And he went on to say that while Old Ran was not up on his subject like some of those young importations from the German universities he did what the rest couldn't do—he specialized in manhood, and he made men.

What happened at Whitesworth soon began to happen all over the country. In scores of colleges the moment the brilliant young product of the new awakening took the chair and announced with a quiet smile that he was ready for business the chairman's henchman rose to move the immediate or eventual retirement of all the Old Rans in the faculty. In less than a score of years after the invasion began the enemy put out of service more than half of the men that were devoting their lives to America's greatest industry—the one industry upon



which her present life and future glory alike depended—the making of men.

And who were put in their places? Nobody. The chair of Applied Manhood was abolished. The business of making men had been overdone, they said, and they didn't need any more makers of men. They needed laboratories—big machine laboratories—and to build the laboratories they needed money, and to run them they needed specialists—accurately built machines made in European universities—made to do one thing—and with Ph.D.'s attached to their names.

And thus in a single night, as it were, and before anybody dreamed of what was going on, a hundred halls of learning scattered over the land were entered, the keys seized, everything American except the Stars and Stripes taken down and trampled upon, everything swept and garnished, Continental ideals put up on the walls, laboratories put in, the wheels started, and when the day dawned—Oh, well——

To-day all over the land scores of institutions which for fifty, seventy, a hundred years were conducted for the defence of American ideals and all that was truly great and glorious in American life are in the hands of men who to all educational intents and purposes are Europeans and who believe that the business of an American college is to glorify the scientific ideals of a foreign, materialistic people and to devote any left-over odds and ends of time to providing for the survival of the fittest among such American animals as have the good fortune

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to be provided with thinking-machine attachments.

And what are they turning out? There are still colleges in America that are engaged in the good old American business of turning out men. They are doing their work in modern ways, but they are still at the old stand. And they are doing the best that anybody can be expected to who must work with one hand and ward off a foreign invader with the other. But these colleges that have been captured in whole or in part since the Great Invasion began—what are they turning out?

### VII

Let us recall the case of—well, Smith was not his name, so let us call him Smith. Never was a boy brought up in a warmer home-nest than Smith. He went to college with the simple faith of his fathers bound up in a bundle with the image of his mother in his heart. It was one of those captured, modernized colleges and the change from the home-nest to his new environment was as if some demon-possessed vixen had snatched a little yellow throbbing puff-ball of a chick from beneath its mother's wing and plunged it into a bucket of cold water. A few days after his arrival at college a brilliant professor of the ripe age of twenty-eight arose and with a cool snap of his finger abolished the past. "The past," he said, "is a vast rubbish heap of ignorance, superstition, credulity, myth, fable, fetishism, and exploded theories, and it cannot abide the light of the new awakening. Science, the true

sun of the universe, has at last risen upon the earth, and in its light old things must pass away and all things become new."

That afternoon in a private conversation with Smith, who had gone to him to seek his advice, he snapped his fingers again and added: "I may as well tell you at once, Mr. Smith, if you wish to approach your studies in the scientific spirit you must have the courage to break with the past—all the past, however strong may be your sentimental attachment to it."

"How about my mother's religion?" asked Smith, with a smile.

"Mr. Smith," said the professor with a tinge of scorn, "this is not the place for children who are still tied to their mother's apron strings. A man must reverence his mother, of course; for while science knows nothing of reverence, it is well for one's personal comfort to accommodate one's self to existing conventions, and for this reason one may in a sense reverence one's mother's religion; but remember, if you expect to be a scholar you must do your own thinking."

"But if religion is a matter of living as well as of thinking, may not my mother be better qualified to pass upon it than I am?"

"We will not discuss religion, Mr. Smith. Religion, as Mr. Lecky has said, is the romance of the poor. The scientific spirit is not interested in romance."

Smith went away speechless with amazement. It was a month before he could speak of it. In the

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interval he was a horrified witness to the abolition of pretty much everything that was dear to him except his mother. One professor snapped his fingers and abolished life after death. Another abolished the whole world of spirit and reduced faith, hope, love, sacrifice, heroism, and all goodness to psychological phenomena with a physiological basis. Still another ruthlessly picked holes in all the spiritual ideals which Smith had brought to college, and the boy went to his room smiling grimly at his resemblance to a poor Greek street vendor who had unaccountably ventured into the campus the day before with a cluster of toy balloons floating proudly over his head and had retreated five minutes later with his balloons and his spirits in a state of collapse.

### VIII

One day he sat down and wrote something like this:

"Yes, she is a charming woman, and I am glad you wrote me about her. I spent four hours with her the other afternoon and I went away with the feeling that I was walking in the land of the spirit and that all real life is spiritual; and when I went to my work I was burning with ambition to be a great spiritual force and to spend my life in awakening men to a consciousness of spirit and of the Great Spirit. But—Oh, well; it's the same old story. I never put on my laboratory apron that I don't hear Old Bart's voice saying: 'Remember, gentlemen, science recognizes the existence of nothing that cannot be brought into the laboratory.' And instantly

my spiritual ideals collapse like a lot of toy balloons under the fire of a shotgun. Of course I know deep down in my heart that there is something more in the world than mere matter—something more than flesh and blood and protoplasm and dollars and doughnuts; but when you come to the laboratory test——”

A year later he wrote something like this:

“Would to God I could be! But you don’t realize what I have to struggle against. You don’t know what it is to live in an atmosphere laden with selfish ideals. You live in the land of the spirit. I breathe the stifling air of the laboratory where men keep a lookout for material phenomena with one eye and for fame with the other. All of our professors are young fellows hustling for glory. Their highest ideal is glory. Nearly every man in the faculty is doing research work with the hope of accomplishing something that will make him famous in the world of science or scholarship. And when these men talk to us about our future it is always in the direction of achieving fame. I haven’t heard an inspirational talk that didn’t appeal to selfish ambition since I came here, except a few which we have had from visitors. Now and then a man comes along who is old enough to have learned the meaning of life and he tries to warm our hearts with visions of a life of self-sacrifice; but it is like trying to melt an iceberg with a spark out of a pipe. Let me give you an idea of what a fellow is up against. The other day Old Bart was talking about—I’ve forgotten what—and as usual he went out of the way to exalt the

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new at the expense of the old. 'Oh, of course,' he said, 'so long as convention demands that we shall respect the religious scruples and superstitions of the masses it would be improper to insist upon the application to life of those principles of science which are abhorrent to the elemental feelings; but we may as well face the fact among ourselves that with the exception of the necessary sacrifices of parents for their offspring the popular notions concerning the duty of the strong to the weak are purely sentimental and have no scientific warrant. Indeed but for the stubborn hold which these scruples and superstitions have upon the common mind I have no doubt that society would to-day follow the dictates of reason and the example of nature and systematically destroy the weak and helpless instead of building homes for incurables and otherwise burdening the strong to keep the worthless part of the race alive.'"

And a year later he wrote something like this:

"It is true: I am nothing but flesh and blood. I was not always so. When I came here my spirit was in command. I believed in spirit. My mother taught me to walk in the land of the spirit. My mind was full of spiritual ideals. I didn't live up to them, but I believed in them and I struggled toward them. I believed that man was made with an angel in him, and I would have been ashamed to admit that I was more an animal than a man. But since I have been here, something, I don't know what, has weighed steadily down upon me until to-day my spirit is like a baby smothered beneath

a blanket. I can hardly hear its cry, and at times it is so still I wonder if it isn't dead. And sometimes I feel as I imagine criminals must have felt in ancient times when they were bound to dead bodies. It seems to me that my spirit is chained to my flesh and that my flesh is slowly poisoning it to death. Oh, if I could——"

IX

No doubt I have talked with more or less extravagance. It is that or nothing in a matter of this sort. I have not taken time to dwell upon the exceptions or the mitigating circumstances in this case or that. Let me say before I stop that many of the graduates that come out from these captured institutions are magnificent specimens of manhood—just as magnificent as one will find anywhere. Many boys have come to these colleges and gone away men in spite of everything. But just imagine your own son plunged into an institution where the atmosphere is so materialistic that you can almost cut it with a knife, and for four years treated purely as an animal with a thinking-machine attachment. Imagine him spending four long years where, out of a hundred professors, there are not more than five or six men—that is, men of the American type—men who have had a chance to develop into real, all-round manhood—the kind of manhood that our fathers called for; the kind Christ calls for; the kind America is calling for. Here is Professor Sophocles, for instance. Professor Sophocles started to the public school when he was six, went to college when he was

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sixteen, went to Germany when he was twenty, came back at twenty-four, plunged into a laboratory, and has been there ever since. In all his life the poor fellow has never had a chance to develop anything but his body and a part of his brain. In all his life he has not had a single day in which he was given a chance to live. He has never breathed the breath of life. He does not know the meaning of life. He has never so much as taken an evening stroll in the land of the spirit. He has simply pushed his way through the world like a worm, biting his way along the narrow groove of his specialty. In all essential respects outside of his body and certain parts of his brain, he is as undeveloped to-day as he was when he started to college at sixteen. Just imagine your son spending four years at a place where nearly all the patterns of manhood that come before one's eyes are like *that!*

What would you have a right to expect?



## VI

### WHY DO SO MANY BRILLIANT MEN REJECT CHRISTIANITY?

#### I

**I** SHALL never forget the first time this question came to me. I was at college and I had just reached the age when a young man does his thinking on the assumption that the supreme court of the universe holds its sessions in the human brain-box. One day a bright young chap sauntered up to me with a confidential air and whispered:

"Did you ever think of it? Why is it that the brainiest men in the world don't believe in religion?"

It struck me squarely between the eyes and I went down all in a heap. I didn't stop to find out whether it was true or whether, if true, it had any significance: the only thought that came to me at the moment was that Old Rab, our professor of chemistry, who had a three-story brain with a mansard roof, didn't believe in religion, and if he couldn't see anything in it, it must be because there was nothing to see.

I suppose if nothing else had happened I should have carried all that I possessed in the way of a religious inheritance to my mental garret and buried it alongside of the fairy tales of my childhood; but fortunately I soon came to myself, and with the

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return of sanity came a vision of my mother; and I did what a boy usually does when the thought of his mother comes to him at such a moment: I resolved to hold on to what I had and think the matter over at a later day.

Years afterwards, when I had been out in the world long enough to begin to see things in their true proportions—and you can never see things in their true proportions until you have travelled some thousands of miles away from your school days—I sat down one day and asked myself that bright chap's question. And as I thought over it, there came to me a vision of the brilliant young professor to whom, as it now occurred to me, he was evidently indebted for his stunning idea. He was the "brainiest" man in the faculty, and his head was so big and heavy that we boys were sure we could see it wobble as he walked. But I now remembered—and I wondered that I had never thought of it before—that notwithstanding the awe with which we regarded that bulging brow, no one of us ever thought of going to the brilliant professor for advice of any sort; and nobody, so far as I could recall, ever showed the slightest respect for his judgment. He belonged to that class of geniuses who, when they see the beans coming up in the garden with the seeds on top, straightway pull them up, and plant them over, wrong side up.

And then I went over the list of "brainy" unbelievers who were then before the world's foot-lights, and I saw that nearly all of them were men of very much the same type—brilliant, scholarly

men of unquestioned authority in their respective departments, but men to whom you might be sure no neighbour would ever think of going for counsel on any problem, great or small, concerning either this world or the next.

We have magnified our "intellectuals" to such dimensions that it is difficult to find a point from which we can get a good look at them, but I dared to ask myself: Who are these unbelievers and how is it that they have no religious faith?

The first thing that I noticed was their remarkably youthful appearance. There were a few grey heads among them, but these had all renounced Christianity early in life. I am still unable to think of a single brilliant unbeliever in the world who did not become an unbeliever before he was thirty. Most of them passed upon Christianity while still at college. All passed upon it before judgment had been developed by contact with life.

The next thing I noticed was that they were all brain-worshippers. They all talked eloquently of reason as the last court of appeal. Nothing could be accepted that did not satisfy the intellect. And by reason, I soon learned, each meant his own reason, and by satisfying the intellect each meant satisfying his own intellect. And I noticed that all spoke of brilliance and intellect and reason as if they were synonyms of wisdom, and that they were all under the illusion so common to brilliant youth in all ages, that the sun never rose until the present generation came upon the stage. Finally I noticed that they were nearly all scientists.

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Now a scientist is supposed to be engaged in the quest of truth for its own sake. But this is an ideal which few scientists have reached. As a matter of fact, the great majority of scientists spend their lives searching for facts from which somebody else must deduce the truth. They devote themselves so entirely to investigation that the faculty with which men reach out and grasp the truth often becomes atrophied; and they are unable, after they have gathered their facts, to come at the final word concerning them. For we get at the facts by investigation, and we get at the truth by weighing. And investigation requires the concentration of the mind upon one thing at a time, while weighing requires the mind to take hold of two or more things at a time, as a judge upon the bench gathers all the testimony and weighs one point against another and then looks squarely at the evidence as a whole. In the very nature of things the scientist's work tends to develop his faculty for getting at the facts at the expense of his faculty for getting at the truth. A famous professor, I am told, has recently completed a twenty years' study of starfish. For twenty long years he has had an eye for nothing but starfish. Now I should esteem it no small privilege to listen to this distinguished authority on the subject of starfish, but I would not cross the street to hear him express his opinion concerning any of the great problems of our time.

Moreover, a scientist's work tends to make him a burning enthusiast to the extent of cutting him off from a large part of his rightful environment in

life, apart from which no man can see things in their true proportion. Not long ago a vivisectioner of more or less fame cut into the vertebral nerves of a dog, and the poor, tortured creature got away from the knife and put his forelegs about his tormentor's neck and pitifully whined for mercy; and his scientific tormentor, with an exaggerated sense of the importance of satisfying his scientific curiosity, felt that it was beneath his dignity as a scientist to listen to such an unscientific appeal, and proceeded with his horrible work. You will say with some heat that you would not care to have the judgment of a man like that on the subject of religion or anything else, and you are right; but I would not have you think that all scientists are like him, nor would I have you imagine that all scientists are devoid of judgment and incapable of getting at the truth. Still you might ask yourself the question which I asked myself: If I am looking for the highest human judgment concerning the Christian religion, should I go to men who, however brilliant they may be, have spent their lives, not in weighing evidence to get at the truth, but in analyzing matter to get at material facts? Is there no mind in the world better equipped to grasp the truth than the scientific mind? And if so, what is that mind?

II

An eminent judge of the United States District Court spent forty minutes one Sunday morning talking to my Bible class. He brought up the evidence and laid it before us. He made us see it.

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He held up one point of evidence against the other and weighed them against one another. We could see the scales turn. Then he announced his decision. We went away that day feeling that we were walking on rock. We had a foundation for our religion. Before we went I said to my men:

“Did it ever occur to you to ask what is the sanest type of mind in the world—the mind to which you can safely go for the solution of the problems that trouble you, the mind that is most likely to lead you into the path of truth, the mind that by its lifelong bent and training is the best fitted to arrive at a decision concerning the truth? Is it the scientific mind, that spends whole years with all its powers concentrated upon a fly’s foot or the right hind leg of a frog? Is it not rather the mind that is devoted to weighing things and that has grown strong in the power to decide between the true and the false? Isn’t the judicial mind the sanest, safest mind in the world? And has it not occurred to you that every judge on the bench in America to-day believes in God? that nearly every judge believes in the Christian religion? that a majority of our judges are earnest Christians, and that there is a larger proportion of Christians in the judiciary than in any other class of men among us?”

But after I had settled that bright young man’s question for myself, it occurred to me that I had been engaged in a very foolish business. If I had gone to a disciple of some new science—the new psychology, for instance—and asked him why it was that so many men of great spirituality did not be-

lieve in his science, I know what he would have done. He would have asked me what spirituality had to do with it. And he would have turned on his heel and left me. That is what I should have done when that bright young chap asked me that question. I should have asked him what the brain had to do with it. But I did not have the sense to ask it, nor did I have the courage; for it takes courage to tell a bright young chap that religion doesn't recognize the brain as the highest court of appeal. Nevertheless it is true, for a man's unaided intellect is no more capable of grasping religion than his spiritual nature is capable of grasping psychology. The intellect can grasp certain facts relating to religion, but it cannot grasp religion, for the simple reason that we can only grasp like with like.

Let me see if I can set this down so that it will stick. God has provided me with several pairs of tongs with which to grasp things. Each pair has its own peculiar use, and they are not interchangeable. We get into a good deal of trouble in our thinking because we often lose sight of this fact. I have a pair of material tongs—my hands—with which I can grasp material things. I do not use them to pick up thoughts. I never try to seize joy or faith or love with them. Then I have a pair of spiritual tongs with which I grasp spiritual things. These are my spiritual senses, or intuitions, if you prefer. I use them to grasp spiritual things—faith, hope, love, God, and the eternal truths of God. I do not use my spiritual intuitions to pick up coal or to pick up facts. I have also a pair of intellectual tongs.

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These are intended for my use in the world of thought. But it has always been the way of men of intellect to magnify these intellectual tongs and to encourage exaggerated notions of their power, and many of us get it into our heads that they can grasp anything that exists beyond matter. Some men have tried to grasp the soul with these tongs; and because they have not succeeded, they have concluded that there is no soul. Some old bachelor scientists have tried to grasp mother-love with them; and, having failed, they tell us that it is all imagination, and that what we call mother-love is a purely physiological matter, or simply instinct for the preservation of offspring. And some very intellectual men have tried to grasp the Christian religion with them, and they tell us that they can't find anything. I can hardly think of anything more absurd. No man would be caught trying to grasp anything outside of matter with his hands, or anything outside of the world of spirit with his spiritual intuitions; and yet men will take their intellectual tongs into the world of spirit and try to grasp the things we tell them are there, and then insist that there is nothing there because their tongs cannot find anything to take hold of.

I can no more grasp that which is spiritual with cold intellect than I can pick a thought out of my brain with cold steel.

### III

It is not strange that so many brilliant men should reject Christianity. The wonder is that any merely



brilliant man should ever believe in it. Instead of being peculiarly fitted for the task of finding out what there is in Christianity, he is peculiarly unfitted for it. When we are told that a certain famous agnostic slept in a barrel in a city alley the first ten years of his life, we do not wonder that he is an agnostic. We wonder that he is not something worse. We don't expect motherless boys who sleep in barrels in city alleys to come out Christians. So when I meet a brilliant man who renounced religion before his judgment had been developed by contact with life, and accepted reason—*his* reason—as his Supreme Guide, and who has confined his life to a purely material environment, I do not wonder that he does not see anything in Christianity. I wonder how anybody in his circumstances ever managed to see anything in it.

The fact that a man is brilliant proves nothing except that he is brilliant. He may be very wise or he may be very unwise. Some of the most brilliant men in the world to-day are among its most conspicuous fools. If I had been bold enough to make this remark three years ago it might have been necessary to prove it, but nobody will challenge it now. Since the Great War began we have heard from nearly all the brilliant men in the world, and never before in the history of mankind has there been such a display of foolishness from high sources. Only the other day the world's most famous philosopher, a very god among the intellectuals, at whose feet the scholars of Europe and America have long sat in ecstasy, gave utterance to an opinion which

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a sixteen-year-old boy of ordinary common sense would be ashamed to own.

It makes no difference how brilliant a man may be; there is no necessary connection between brilliance and wisdom, and neither brilliance nor learning nor both together can keep a man from being a fool. Besides, a man may know everything worth knowing in one sphere of life and he may know nothing worth knowing in any other sphere.

A backwoodsman from the mountains stumbles one day into a chemical laboratory. The moment he shuts the door behind him he is in a new world. But he does not see it. He has nothing with which to grasp it. So far as he is concerned the world of chemistry does not exist. Nothing exists but a lot of vile-smelling crucibles. Would you say that this man, who is an unquestioned authority on his own specialty—"moonshine" perhaps, or mountain bears—is thereby fitted to decide whether the world of chemistry is real or imaginary?

An old bachelor, who has lived fifty years by himself, spends a day in a home illumined by love. His mother died when he was a baby, and he grew up in an orphanage. He learned to spell love when a little child, and he has never spelled it since. Would you think it strange if he should leave that home at the end of the day without having so much as suspected the existence of the world of love that filled it?

A young man just out of college consecrates himself for life on the altar of material science. He gives his days and nights to the study of matter. He

has no thought for anything else. As time runs on he loses all taste for everything else, all capacity for enjoying everything else. At fifty he has not read a poem in thirty years, and he tells you that it is all bosh. He has not heard an opera or an oratorio in thirty years, and music is all bosh. He has never had time to fall in love, and love is all bosh. He is a stranger to the world of art, the world of the higher emotions, the world of sentiment. In his devotion to the study of matter he has never given a thought to spirit or that which is spiritual. He has never tried to reach out after God in prayer. He has remained a stranger to all the higher impulses that come to a man in the stillness of the twilight. Now this man can speak with authority about anything in the world of science, but who will take him seriously in the world of art, or the world of love? It was such a man who said to a friend who had been crushed by the loss of his wife: "Pshaw, man, what are you crying about? The world is full of women just as good as she was."

If we do not take what this man says seriously about the world of art, or the world of love, because we know that he knows nothing about it, why should we take him seriously when he presumes to speak with authority about the spiritual world, of which he is equally ignorant? I hardly know anything more pathetic than Darwin's confession, made after he had passed the prime of life. He tells us that he had lost all taste for music, all taste for poetry, all taste for the plastic arts, all taste for everything beautiful except natural scenery. He had devoted

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himself so earnestly and exclusively to the one sphere in which he had chosen to live that all other spheres had become foreign to him. He had retained his taste for natural scenery only because his investigations of nature had kept him in touch with natural scenery. The pitiful thing about it is that Darwin could see that he had lost his ability to grasp these things simply because he had spent his life apart from them, and yet it never occurred to him that his refusal to believe in the spiritual world was due simply to the fact that he had spent his life entirely apart from it. The fact that a man who has devoted his life to the material world cannot see anything in the spiritual world does not prove that there is no spiritual world any more than the fact that a mountain backwoodsman cannot see the world of chemistry proves that there is no world of chemistry, or the fact that an old bachelor cannot see the world of love proves that there is no world of love.

And so it is not a matter of any concern to you or me what an intellectual man may think concerning the Christian religion from a purely intellectual point of view. It is interesting to know what he thinks concerning the historical foundations of our religion, or concerning the reasonableness of certain doctrines which we have reasoned out for ourselves, but what he may say of religion itself from a purely intellectual point of view should have no more weight with us than what a very pious man may say of psychology would have with a psychologist. Not, indeed, because religion is contrary to reason, but

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because it belongs to another sphere, because it is above reason, just as all the most precious things of life—all the blessed children of our intuitions and emotions—our spirit of self-sacrifice, our heroism, our faith and hope and love—are above reason.

## VII

### WHY IS THE WORKINGMAN SO INDIFFERENT TO THE CHURCH?

#### I

**I**T is human to magnify troubles. It is especially human to magnify religious troubles. We are always asking what is the matter with the church, as if all the churches in the land were desperately ill. We ask what is the matter with the preachers, as if the preachers everywhere were miserable failures. We ask what is the matter with the college that it should turn out so many unbelievers, as if we never heard of a college that was not a hotbed of infidelity. So we ask—we are continually asking—why the workingman is so indifferent to the church, as if it were an established fact that the only people who ever darken a church door are people who do not work with their hands.

The workingman is not so indifferent to the church. At any rate there are more people in the church who work with their hands than people who don't. In the country the man who makes his living with his hands is the pillar of the church. In the small towns and villages he is usually the most devout and the most useful man in the church. Even in the cities, where he is popularly supposed to be a church-

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hater, we still have churches composed almost wholly of workingmen. In some parts of the country a majority of the city churches are workingmen's churches. And the workingmen's church, wherever you find it, is nearly always the best church in the community. It nearly always leads in liberality, in spirituality and in every useful activity.

Taking the country as a whole there is far less reason for asking why the workingman is so indifferent to the church than there is for asking why the man who doesn't work is so indifferent to it.

Yet in our American cities there are millions—tens of millions—of workingmen who hardly know what the inside of a church looks like.

There is no use in making the problem bigger than it is. There is no use in saying that these people hate the church. It is true there are some who do hate it. There are a few to whom the sight of a place of worship is as a red rag to a bull; there are more who "cuss" the church, but gently; there are many who carry in their hearts a latent antagonism to the church; but the great mass—the millions—are simply indifferent to it. They have turned from it, but they have not turned against it.

To grasp the full significance of this appalling fact we must bear in mind that the workingman is not naturally or constitutionally antagonistic to religion. On the contrary he is naturally religious—more so perhaps than any other class. If he lives quietly alone—as on the farm,—or if he is thrown constantly with other classes—as in the village,—he is almost sure to be drawn to the church and

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sooner or later attach himself to it. I speak of course of the American-born workingman. Whatever may be said of the labourers dumped on our shores it is not, as a rule, until American workingmen are massed together in large numbers and begin to think together under alien influences that they begin to manifest any unusual antagonism or indifference to the church.

I know that we do not usually look in this direction for the secret of the trouble. There are other influences nearer home which seem abundantly sufficient to account for it and we seldom think of going further. There are conditions in many of our churches which we never think of without wondering why we should ever have expected the workingman to be anything but indifferent to the church. Take for instance the case of—well, let us say, the Church of the Resting Saints. As I have said, Resting Saints not only does not go after the workingman but it has never set its house in order to receive him if he should come. True, there are empty pews enough and to spare, but there is not a spot in all the house where a workingman could make himself comfortable. And the average workingman, be it remembered, is no stickler for comfort—not for more, I should say, than one can get from the top of a rail fence while listening to a three-hour speech on the tariff.

And certainly Resting Saints has never prepared to receive the workingman's wife. I know that the Ladies' Aid Society will not agree with me on this point. The other day when the new member of the



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"Aid" suggested that something should be done to get the workingmen's wives to attend church, she was simultaneously and emphatically informed by each of the twenty-eight older members present that there was no earthly reason why every workingman's wife in the city should not come if she wanted to. And then somebody, by way of illustration, called attention to the fact that that woman—what was her name?—that woman who wore that outrageous—Oh! Mrs. John Somebody—yes, that Mrs. John Mechanic, who for some reason, nobody ever knew why—What on earth did she join our church for, anyway?—as if ours was a Tom, Dick and Harry church!—that Mrs. John Mechanic who joined the church four years ago has never been back since—not a *single* time! True, as Mrs. Astorbocker remarked, the poor woman probably had not had a new hat in four years, but what did that have to do with it? If she were really in earnest she would have come occasionally anyway.

Of course this was unanswerable and the new member was squelched. If the new member had thought of it she might have replied that eight of the Ladies' Aid members stayed at home last Sunday because, on their own admission, they had nothing to wear; but that would hardly have been convincing. Or she might have called attention to the fact that Mrs. Astorbocker herself had just remarked that she positively could not go last Sunday because her milliner had disappointed her and she really and truly did not have a thing to put on her head that was a day under three months old; but

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probably that would not have been convincing either. A woman of Mrs. Astorbocker's standing couldn't be expected to wear any old thing. Besides, the Ladies' Aid, please understand, does not set itself up to be convinced by its newest member.

But even the Ladies' Aid, I am sure, would be willing to admit that women are women everywhere, and if it should once occur to them that Mrs. John Mechanic is a woman, I believe they would be the first to see that there is not a spot in Resting Saints where that poor creature could make herself feel at home. And I believe that they would agree with me that if the good women of Resting Saints would abolish the regular Sunday morning Millinery and Fine Clothes Exhibition and be content to come to church in their shopping dresses, a great stone would be rolled away from the church door and not a few women of Mrs. John Mechanic's set who would really like to go would have a chance. However, I don't know about that: perhaps quite as many of Mrs. Astorbocker's set who have been fairly regular attendants all these years might suddenly discover that it was no longer worth while. It's a problem.

### II

Of course this was not the trouble with Mrs. John Mechanic's husband. John was not the sort of man to be embarrassed by what those two wriggling, giggling girls who sat in the next pew thought of his Sunday best. He went—that one time—partly because his wife wanted him to go and partly because he was feeling the need of a change. He knew

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before he went that a fourteen-dollar bargain suit that had seen four years' steady service was not all that the occasion demanded, but he had long ago grown indifferent to occasion's demands. All he wanted was—well, he wanted a change. As a matter of fact, deep down in his soul he was fearfully hungry, but he didn't know that. All he knew when he went was that he wanted a change and all he knew when he came away was that the change he got was not what he wanted. As for the service, the whole thing was Greek. A tall fellow who looked like a new black pencil stood up in the midst of a lot of flowers and struck an attitude and addressed a few words of prayer to an attentive congregation that was thinking of nothing in particular. There was a good deal of singing and reading chopped up together—some of it was chopped too fine, he thought,—a man and a woman in the choir “jawed” one another on a high string,—at least that was all he could make out of it,—a young woman screeched and squalled until she drowned out the organ and the organist gave up in despair, and then the preacher spent twenty-five minutes in saying some things that sounded like sense and some things that might have been sense if one could only have understood them.

Just what the sermon was intended for was not clear to John. The preacher did not seem to be in favour of any particular candidate nor did he explain just what he hoped to accomplish. There was no reference to anything that had to do with a workingman's life, but he was not disposed to complain

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about that; probably the preacher didn't know he was there. And probably if he had known he could not have done better. That was one of the two things which made John feel before the service was over that he had come to the wrong place. He and the preacher didn't seem to have much in common. Of course, he was all right, but—well, he just didn't seem to be folks. He talked to the women about social duties and he said something to the men about counting-rooms and stocks and bonds and things, and he seemed to think that the world was one half boulevard and the other half Wall Street and that there wasn't a sign of a mill or machine shop anywhere.

As John sat looking at the man he recalled the other representatives of the church whom he had heard from time to time down at the shops. One was a big strapping young fellow who would come to the shops every day at noon and talk to the men while they were eating their dinner. He was a wonderful fellow. He could get right up close to you and make you hear his heart go thump. But one day he failed to turn up and he never knew what became of him. As for the rest—well, they were a poor lot. Most of them looked like they had been laid off or had laid themselves off—poor played-out fellows who meant well but seemed to have loose screws in their heads. And they were always talking about things that nobody understood, like the second blessing and the second coming, and always doing sums in arithmetic to prove that the "coming" was almost at hand, and trying to get a fellow

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scared. They were the only representatives of the church he had ever seen except the preacher who stood before him. And he didn't like the samples. He liked that big strapping fellow, but the rest were "no good."

There was an old millionaire sitting up at the front who helped take the collection and this was the other thing that made John feel so hopelessly out of place. Not the collection but the millionaire. But no, that is wrong; it was not the millionaire but the way everybody treated him. At the beginning of the service John was disposed to mock at the idea that he was in a place of worship, but at the end he took it all back; never before had he seen so many sincere, whole-hearted worshippers. As the old man came down the aisle it looked as if the whole congregation was about to fall on its face and root its nose in the carpet before him. It didn't do it, but after the benediction there was a grand rush in the direction of the great man's pew and when John left Mrs. Millionaire and her daughters were "receiving" in grand form.

As John turned away he swallowed something with a grunt. It was just a small, soft "cuss."

As he passed out he noticed that those two wriggling, giggling girls who had failed to embarrass him at the beginning of the service, were just the age of his Sallie. Poor little Sallie! A teacher in the primary department—an angel if there ever was one—had come to John's home and carried his Sallie off to Sunday-school when she was a tiny tot. And for six years little Sallie had been as happy as a

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bird in May. The primary department at Resting Saints was a much warmer nest than her own home and the atmosphere fairly quivered with love; but by and by when she was sent out into the big school room to be with the bigger girls she found herself in an icebox. The big girls gave just one glance at her clothes and turned away. That was the end of life's dream. The poor girl went back next Sunday and the next, but it was no use and she gave up. She hadn't been to church or Sunday-school since.

It all came to John like a flash as he went out of the door and again he swallowed something. But it was not so small or so soft.

### III

There is no use mincing matters. There is no room for John Mechanic or for his wife or for his daughter Sallie at Resting Saints.

Yet, when you have put your finger down at this point you know, almost instinctively, that you have not reached the bottom of the matter. On his way home John recalled the Sunday afternoon he spent down at the Railroad Young Men's Christian Association. There were a thousand men in the big hall and they all stood up and sang a "Moody and Sankey" hymn with a vim that made the windows rattle. A big fellow came forward and prayed as if he were talking to God over the phone, and then they had another hymn that made the windows rattle again. The secretary made a little talk, a visitor made a little talk and a locomotive enginner stood

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up and tried to tell what Christ had done for him, and everybody broke down and cried like babies. Then they sang another hymn that nearly blew the roof off. John's heart mellowed again as he thought of it and he caught himself saying aloud: "If they'd give us that at church, I believe I'd go every Sunday."

No doubt that would help matters. If we would rid the preachers of the deadly handicaps which the senseless demands of worldly congregations have bound about them—if we would take them from serving tables and ringing doorbells and looking after everything under the sun that respectable shirkers inside and outside of the church choose to put upon them—if we would allow them their whole time and strength for their legitimate work so that they could use the big church plant to the limit of its capacity and among other things provide different kinds of preaching services to meet the needs of different kinds of people, instead of one service designed to please the tastes and soothe the nerves of the extra cultured among the elect—no doubt that would help matters. No doubt several hundred thousand workingmen who now stay at home would go to church. But it would not solve the problem. It would not go to the root of the matter.

The great mass of workingmen in our cities don't stay at home because they don't like the singing or the preaching or the fine clothes exhibition or the millionaire who helps to take up the collection. They stay at home because they don't like the church.

Why don't they like the church?

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### IV

Now I hope I shall not be misunderstood. What I am going to say may not have a pleasant sound, but that does not necessarily mean anything. I am not going to make any insinuations. Least of all am I going to make any insinuations against workingmen. There are no better people in America to-day than God-fearing workingmen. The man who makes his living with his hands and whose hands, head and heart are all working in harmony with the teachings and spirit of Christ is to my mind the very backbone of the nation. Nor am I going to say anything against labour unions. I believe in labour and I believe in union, and I have never seen any good reason why I should not believe in labour unions. Besides, I am too deeply interested in the welfare of certain workingmen in particular not to feel an interest in the welfare of workingmen in general.

But why is it that so many of them don't like the church? Why is it that while a large majority of our workingmen outside of the cities heartily support the church a larger majority in our cities are utterly indifferent to it?

Let us look the truth squarely in the face. The great mass of city workingmen don't like the church because they have been doing their thinking in masses under the guidance of aliens who don't like the church and who are interested in turning them away from it.

Do I mean to say that workingmen cannot do



their own thinking? No. They *can* do their own thinking. Some of the clearest thinkers I ever knew were workingmen. One of the safest thinkers I know to-day is a carpenter. Lay your problem before him, leave him all the material you have on the subject and let him alone for a week. When you go back you will find that he has done his work as thoroughly as a scientist and usually with far better judgment. So long as a workingman lives quietly to himself or mingles with other classes he is just as likely to come to right conclusions concerning the vital issues of life as anybody else. But the converse is also true. Take him out of his quiet environment and put him down in the midst of his fellow-craftsmen where they are massed so closely together that he cannot distinguish between the working of his own brain and that of his neighbours, and he is just as likely to come to wrong conclusions as anybody else. Any people who do their thinking in the mass are going to think with the mass and that means that they are going to think with the man who happens at the moment to dominate the mass. It is no reflection upon the great mass of workingmen who are indifferent to the church to say that they are victims of mass-thinking. If lawyers or doctors or preachers were living under conditions which drove them to thinking in the mass they would be victims of mass-thinking also. Now and then lawyers and preachers and doctors have been thinking in the mass and they have gone wrong—just like plain everyday workingmen.

I suppose the reason we have never really faced

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this problem—for we have never faced it, we have only talked about it—is because it is so easy to get it off our conscience. All we have to do is to charge it to the labour union. And nothing is simpler. Workingmen loved the church before the labour union came, now they don't; *ergo* the labour union is to blame. And if the labour union is to blame of course that settles it: we are not responsible for the labour union any more than we are for Gibraltar and there is no use in butting one's brains out against either.

But the labour union has not turned our workingmen from the church. Men have come into the labour union and turned them from the church, but that is another matter. The labour union brought the workingmen together and made it easy for them to think in the mass and it was while they were thinking in the mass that they turned from the church; but the mass-thinking was not directed by the labour union. The trouble came from without. And it came from abroad. If our American workingmen had been left to do their own thinking under the direction of their own leaders the result would have been different. There are small communities where they have been thus left to themselves—where no foreign influence has ever entered—and no one ever thinks of the unions in these communities as being antagonistic or indifferent to the church.

### V

Nobody seems to know how many different kinds of socialists there are in the world, but it is suffi-

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cient for our present purpose to remember that there are two general classes—those who acknowledge God and accept the teachings of Jesus and those who don't. I have nothing to say against the Christian socialist; nor have I anything to say for the anti-Christian socialist except that I admire his zeal. As a propagandist he beats his Christian comrade any day. He will compass more sea and land to make one proselyte than the ancient Pharisee. And when he makes him—well, he does not make him an American. The anti-Christian socialist is not an American product and he is not interested in things American. No matter where he was born—in Germany, in New Jersey or in Wisconsin—he no more belongs to us than a newly landed Jap. And he does not come to us to be Americanized: he comes for converts.

Making converts is his business and he has found that there is no place for making converts to his particular type of socialism like the middle of a fervid human mass. Therefore when he starts out on his mission he makes for the mass. His hope is in the herded and pent-up and the jammed together. He looks for crowded tenements and crowded mills and crowded meetings where hard hit men lose their identity in one another's heat and sweat and grime and grievances and odorous murmurs and distorted visions and feverish swearings and blank despair.

It would not have been so bad if he had confined himself to the hard hits, but his soul hungered for more savoury meat. He wanted the strong, brave,

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broad-shouldered, big-fisted American workingman and he went into the American labour union to get him. He had to sneak in at first and he had to go in sheep's clothing. He knew that the average American workingman was a decent Christian and that he would no more listen to his anti-Christian sentiments than he would listen to the devil. So long as the American workingman went to church and listened to the preacher and remembered the golden rule it was folly to think that anything could be done with him. And so he quietly slipped his book of doctrines into his breastpocket, buttoned up his coat, and went to work to turn the workingman from his church. It was the subtlest, most sagacious piece of diplomatic work that has been done since the day that diplomacy was born in Eden.

"The church? Oh well; yes; yes, the church is all right, I suppose; but there isn't anything in it for me. Think now, just for a moment: what did a workingman ever get out of it? I am sure I never got anything out of it. Oh, I'm not blaming the church, but I'm just looking at the facts.

"Of course, it's all right in a way, but it's a rich man's affair, not ours. I don't see why a workingman should pay out his good money to run a club for other people's benefit. You can see how it is for yourself. We go down in our jeans for the building and the new organ, and when they've got all we've got it's good-bye, John, and they don't want to see us again until the women folks begin to think they must have a new carpet. And when they get the new carpet they don't want a workingman to

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put his foot on it. Oh! now, don't misunderstand me: I am not saying a word against religion, I'm just giving you the facts. You know how it is yourself. You've been paying your money for music, and the rich people have been taking it and buying the sort of stuff that suits them and you don't get a thing out of it. And you don't have a voice in anything either. What do they care what the workingmen want? Old man Tom owns the church and what he says goes and that's the end of it."

And so it went on and on to the end of the chapter.

It is easy to say that the workingman was an idiot for listening to such nonsense, but I once knew a shrewd, low-minded fellow to set to work to influence a lot of learned college professors, and he succeeded so well that he was able to lead them around by the nose as easily as a New York ward politician leads his gang to the polls. It is no reflection upon the mentality or character of American workingmen to say that the shrewdest and most zealous propagandists of modern times have succeeded after more than a generation of ceaseless effort in convincing millions of them that the church is conducted by the rich for the benefit of the rich and that as the rich are the oppressors of the poor it is foolish for workingmen to expect anything from it or to have anything to do with it. If the socialistic emissaries of the Karl Marx type had found the American lawyers and doctors and preachers massed under like conditions and had conducted the same propaganda among them they would have turned

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the lawyers and doctors and preachers away from the church also.

### VI

But where was the church all this time? Where were the preachers? What did they do to offset this propaganda?

I wish we could forget it, for it is the saddest chapter in the religious history of our time. The church didn't do anything. The preachers didn't do anything. After the horses were stolen there was a tremendous noise about closing the barn door, but that was all.

Of course I am speaking only in general terms. There were individual churches here and there that did try to do something. There were earnest preachers here and there who did try to do something. But the fact remains that the great American church, which from the beginning of its history had had the love and earnest support of the great mass of American workingmen stood still for a whole generation while the most appalling steal of the ages—the theft of the hearts of millions of her working sons from her own bosom was taking place before her very eyes.

What was the secret of this strange apathy? Did the church want the workingmen to go? Were the centre pews tired of being a Tom, Dick and Harry church? Did the preachers want them to go? Everybody knows that everybody else is afraid of the labour union. Not because the labour union is a monster, but because it is a giant. Were the

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preachers afraid of the labour union? The labour union was not against the church. Did the preachers keep silent because they were afraid of the labour union, or because they were afraid of being misunderstood?

No doubt there are pastors who have been so anxious not to incur the ill will of the rich that they have neglected the poor, but I know pastors who have been so anxious not to incur the ill will of the poor that they have neglected the rich; and I am sure that thousands of earnest preachers who stood by and watched this great theft go on kept their tongues solely because they were afraid of incurring the ill will of the workingmen and thereby doing more harm than good. But it was a colossal blunder. We can see it now, though we did not see it at the beginning. When the day came for the Christian workingmen of America to organize their labour unions the preachers stood aloof. They did not bid them Godspeed. They did not offer them a word of counsel. They did not tell them that if they wanted their union to be a real brotherhood it would have to be based on the Fatherhood of God and be conducted according to the teachings of Jesus. They did not go with these men and try to help them get their organization on a Christian basis and make them feel that the church was with them. And when they discovered that socialists of the anti-Christian type were at work among them they did not sound the trumpet in warning. They were standing upon the watch tower and they saw the enemy coming and they did not put their trumpets to their lips. The

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enemy came on and did its work without protest—because the watchmen upon the tower were afraid they would be misunderstood!

As I have said, there are still labour unions in many of the smaller communities in America that have never been reached by foreign influences. And there are thousands of splendid Christian men in them. And they are like the rest of us; they are not immune. The slick sophistry of the socialist of the anti-Christian type has deceived many men of far higher intelligence. And these anti-Christian socialists are pushing steadily on toward these smaller communities.

In a thousand communities there is still time for the faithful watchman to blow his trumpet.



## VIII

### WHAT IS THE TROUBLE BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE?

#### I

**I**T is as absurd to speak of a conflict between religion and science as it would be to speak of a collision between two locomotives running on parallel tracks. But this is not saying that there is no trouble between what is loosely called religion and what is loosely called science. There is trouble and a great deal of it, and it is folly to deny it.

That, by the way, is the reason why there is so much trouble: we have magnified it by denying it. If we had frankly admitted what was true and let the rest go, it might not have been so serious; but we denied everything and we denied it so fervently and so persistently that we succeeded in convincing the world that there was a great deal more trouble than actually existed. And the world is holding doggedly to its conviction. The pulpit is still protesting, still discovering new evidences of harmony, still descanting with more or less eloquence upon the loving relations that are daily growing more loving between Religion and her faithful handmaiden; but the world only smiles and looks at its watch. The world is convinced that a more impertinent, brazen

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handmaiden never lived, and it has every reason to believe that Religion would have slapped her jaws long ago if she could have done so without making a scandal.

Of course there is no trouble between religion and science, strictly speaking. That ought to go without saying, but it doesn't. The world knows that there is a very serious conflict between some things that are called religion and some things that are called science, and it has never taken the trouble to go to the root of the matter. It never takes the trouble to go to the root of the matter: it is so much easier to say that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire and let it go at that. Nevertheless the smoke in the present case does not come from a conflict between religion and science. There never has been and, in the nature of things, never can be a conflict between religion and science. Religion pursues its way along a spiritual path. Science pursues its way along a material path. These paths never come together. They may run parallel—it is the fond belief of many that they do run parallel—but whether they do or not it is no more possible for science to run over religion than it is for a rolling stone to run over love. Certain unbelieving scientists have attacked certain things that are more or less associated with religion and discredited them; but science has never discredited religion. Scientists may be unscientific, but science is not. It has never been and can never be guilty of the absurdity of expressing an opinion about a world with which it has never come in contact.

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Science is neither the enemy nor friend of religion. Some things that are loosely called science are the enemies of some things that are loosely called religion, and some are friends—handmaidens, if you will,—but science and religion strictly speaking have never known each other. They have never seen each other. Science is no more conscious of religion than a rose is conscious of the smile of the child who kisses it. They belong to entirely different kingdoms.

As for science expressing an opinion about religion, it has never had an opinion about religion to express. It knows nothing about anything that cannot be carried into the laboratory and it has never had an opinion about things it knows nothing about. Science has never said that religion is a phantom. Science has never said that there is no spirit. Science has never said that there is no God. Science has never uttered a word against the laws of the spiritual life. Science has never said that the law of the survival of the fittest should be applied to human conduct. Some scientists have said so, but not science. Science has never denied the existence of the soul. The fact that some scientists have denied everything that is precious to mankind proves nothing except that some scientists, like some other people, have a habit of talking of things they know nothing about.

### II

No: science has nothing against religion. Nor has religion anything against science. Yet, as every-

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body knows, there is no end of trouble between the scientific world and the religious world. It may be true that science and religion are running on parallel tracks, but somehow or other the cause of science and the cause of religion are always running into each other. And they are always getting hurt. At least our side is always getting hurt.

We Christians have a crow to pick with the scientific world, or, rather a large part of it, and we might as well pick it. I mean of course the unbelieving part. The cause of Christ never had a better friend than the believing scientist, but one might as well admit that the majority of scientists are not believers. Scientific pursuits tend to cultivate the senses which grasp matter at the expense of the senses which grasp spirit, and it is only natural that a majority of the pursuers should see nothing in religion to believe. And it is just as natural that seeing as they do—or failing to see as they do—they should imagine that we Christians are irresponsible creatures in pursuit of a phantom and that they should treat us as such. We don't complain of that. That is to be expected. What we do complain of is that they should have imagined that our irresponsible condition gave them the right to act in an utterly irresponsible manner toward us and our cause. We Christians don't mind being told that we are irresponsible creatures engaged in the pursuit of a phantom, but we do insist that irresponsible creatures have a right to responsible treatment and that even a phantom is entitled to a square deal.

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There is no use in mincing words; the attitude of the men who oppose Christianity in the name of science is not only unscientific but it is insincere. It has been so from the beginning. The rationalistic scientist started out by charging Christianity with tyranny. He went boldly before the people and told them that they were priest-ridden—that the clergy had bound them mind and soul, and they did not dare to do their own thinking. He wanted to know why they were such fools as to allow the church to crack the whip of authority over them. Where did the church get that whip, anyway? And what right did it have to it? What right did it have to tell the people what they should think? Why didn't they rebel? If they ever expected to be men, they *must* rebel. The divine right of the church was a myth. Every man was his own sovereign. If they would achieve the end of their being they must break off the shackles which the church had bound upon them and come forth and take their stand with science under the banner of Freedom and Truth, where every man could do his own thinking and where there would be no priests to molest them or make them afraid.

That was all right as far as it went. That is, it would do. It was not accurate but it was accurate enough. Unquestionably the people were not doing their own thinking. Unquestionably they were priest-ridden: that is, they were ridden—ridden hard—whether by priests, preachers, rabbis, office-holders, schoolmasters, Fourth-of-July orators or political bosses,—and unquestionably the whip of

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authority was eternally cracking over their heads. But now behold! No sooner had the people broken away from their tyrants and flocked to their new standard than this eloquent apostle of Freedom and Truth suddenly dissolved into thin air and in his place appeared an Autocrat the like of whom the world had not seen in a thousand years. "Yes," he said, with a quiet smile as he clapped a new pair of shining handcuffs upon the last recruit,—“yes, you are free to do your own thinking now, only you must think as science dictates.” And from that day to this the rationalistic scientist has cracked the whip of authority over the minds of men with a fierceness and recklessness that would have made an ancient rabbi or a medieval priest blush for shame. We still prate of the priest-ridden past, but good heavens! when did the world ever see a time when intelligent men and women bowed down so abjectly to their masters as they do to-day? And among all the forces that men are said to fear most—the press, the labour union, the party whip, the fashionmaker, the high society leader, big business, militarism, votes for women, whiskey, anti-saloon league, Milwaukee beer—where is the force on earth to-day that can shut a man's mouth as tightly as the warning gesture of a single finger silently uplifted in the name of science?

### III

We don't blame the priests of science for snatching the whip of authority out of the hands of the priests of religion, but we do blame them for beating

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the priests of religion at their own game. Not only have they used the whip more effectively than it was ever used before, but they have added to their programme of frightfulness an even greater terror. In all ages tyrants have been the world's greatest inventors of bugaboos. Nebuchadnezzar of old, bent on further conquests over the minds of his subjects, set up a great scarecrow image of himself upon the plains and commanded all men on pain of death to fall down and worship before it. Bent on further conquests over the minds of their subjects our modern tyrants of science constructed out of their own half-baked opinions a monstrous image which they named Science and commanded all men on pain of scorn to fall down and worship before it. It was a wonderful idea and it has worked marvellously. If a man wants to talk against Christianity and finds himself unable to quote science—true science—against it, all he has to do is to point to this great compressed mass of opinions of rationalistic scientists and call the mass Science, and the trick is done. If some reckless piece of impertinence—a Shadrach, Meshach or Abednego—dares to question the divinity of the image, he has only to consign him to the fiery furnace prepared for ignoramuses, fools and backnumbers, and his victory is complete. This image is no more like true science than those ambitious, fame-thirsty youngsters who are always parading before the footlights in the name of science are like true scientists; yet the world will fall on its face before it any day in preference to the true article. No other modern inven-

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tion has shown such power to cast spells. Gather the people together from any quarter and let the cornet sound, and the flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, and down they will go on their faces before the golden image. Great is Nebuchadnezzar! Great is Science! Let a man who has no hope of getting a hearing in his own name stand up before any audience anywhere and utter an opinion about religion in the name of science and the entire assembly will bow before him as reverently as if he were a messenger from heaven. And all this in spite of the fact that every intelligent man knows that what the enemies of religion appeal to as science when they are talking against Christianity is not science at all, but simply a scarecrow idol designed to overawe the "common herd," like the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, the oracle of the ancient pagan priest and the party whip of the modern political boss.

A famous scientist after devoting forty years or more to the study of matter to the absolute exclusion of everything else under heaven, who never in all his life attempted to get into communication with the Invisible, who never walked in the fields alone in the cool of the evening, who never gave a thought to the land of the spirit, who never turned his steps toward the holy of holies, never put his ear up against the thin partition that separates the seen from the unseen and listened for the voices beyond—this famous scientist stood up the other day and in the name of science coolly declared that there was no evidence that human beings had anything that



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might be properly called a soul. He had never looked for a soul, had never been interested in the question whether there was such a thing as a soul or not, had never given a moment's serious thought to anything that could not be carried into the laboratory, had never attempted to use the inner senses that are designed to grasp the things of spirit; yet he was quite sure as a scientific man that such a thing as a soul did not exist. That is the attitude and that is the spirit of the unbelieving scientist—the only intelligent man in the world, so far as I have found, who insists upon having his pie and eating it too.

It is simply nonsense to say that the religious world has nothing against the scientific world. There are many scientists who are devout Christians, but there are many more who are not, and among those who are not are the worst enemies of religion that we have to contend with to-day. Indeed they are practically the only enemies left on the field that we are compelled to notice. The old-time God-hating pamphleteer who was as ignorant of science as he was of religion, has long since disappeared. The blatant infidel orator who could set whole audiences to scoffing at Christ by the clever manipulation of sophistry with blasphemy and cheap wit has also passed. To get the ear of the present generation one must do his scoffing in the name of science. No one knows this better than the unbelieving scientist of the aggressive type. And he is living fully up to his knowledge. He knows that he has no more right to express an opinion about religion in the name of

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science than he has to express an opinion about a humming bird in the name of a cabbage, but he is doing it. And he is doing it with a show of authority that wins the ear not only of the ignorant, but of the very elect. And he is making no end of trouble.

But he is not making all of the trouble. He is not making the worst of the trouble.

### IV

Science is like a great many other good remedies in that its value depends largely upon getting the dose just right. In the good old days it was not uncommon to hear it argued that if a medicine was good the more one took of it the better; but the fact that two teaspoonfuls of one's favourite prescription has effected a cure no longer encourages a person of ordinary discretion to take a bottle-full at a gulp. We have learned our lesson as to our family medicines—we were at it so long and paid so dearly for our mistakes that we could hardly help learning it—but when it comes to other remedies we still follow our ancient reasoning and our ancient prejudice against spoons and drink from the bottle. If a thing is good we want all there is of it. And we want it all at once.

Forty or fifty years ago when the world began to rave over science as heaven's panacea for human ills a few thoughtful men here and there scented this danger and sent out solemn warnings against it. I am not speaking now of the preachers; the preachers were raving also—raving against it. I am speaking

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of men who were on the ground and who knew what they were talking about. In the early days of science the men who were drawn to it were usually men of scientific temperament. They were modest, cautious and honest to the core. They didn't sound a trumpet before them. They didn't rush into print. They didn't parade before the footlights. They had a horror of making claims and magnifying things. They didn't feel that they knew much or were doing much, and when they made a discovery they were not so sure that it was worth mentioning. And so when they announced the result of their labours it was with diffidence and brevity. And when people began to applaud they protested—with many a deprecatory gesture. They believed in science, but they didn't believe in making a great ado over it. They didn't want the world to imagine that they had discovered an Eldorado. They knew what the world had suffered from over-emphasis and they were careful not to stir up any undue enthusiasm. But by and by a younger set came along—a set just as brilliant, but of another temperament; an ambitious, enthusiastic, cocksure set; a spectacular, trumpet-sounding set;—and this new set introduced the custom of announcing discoveries with a great blaze of fireworks. And that set the world on fire. Everybody went wild over the wonders of science. People could talk of nothing else. They thought they had found a new god.

To the older set this world-madness was horrifying, and as I have said, here and there a solemn voice of warning was raised against it. We can read

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these prophetic warnings to-day in certain old books in our libraries. Some of them are doleful enough, but in the light of what has happened since they were uttered they are wonderfully interesting. The world was making a lamentable mistake, they said. Science was indeed a good thing, a wonderful thing, but it was not everything. It was not the mission of science to save the world and if the world insisted on dropping everything else and going after it for salvation it would never be saved. Science had its own channel and within that channel it might accomplish much, but it could do nothing outside of it. Besides, if men persisted in looking to science for everything they would soon be doing all their thinking in the terms of science, devoting all their faculties and energies to its service, centring all their hopes upon its achievements, and the inevitable result would be that the race would eventually become an aggregation of perfectly trained, highly intellectual animals fitted to breathe only a materialistic atmosphere and incapable of living in the land of the spirit, the only land where human beings can live as men because it is the only land where they can see and pattern after God. Let us have science, they said, but let us beware of too much science. For we must not only learn but we must live, and in order to live we must feel; and if we emphasize science overmuch we shall emphasize matter overmuch and the great spiritual fountains of the world will dry up and all the blessed things of the spirit and even the senses with which we discern the things of the spirit will dry up with them.

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But the world wouldn't listen. The world had decided that it had found the philosopher's stone, the water of life, the magic wand and the seven-league boots all in one, and it was determined to make the most of its discovery. Science was working miracles and the world wanted miracles. Science would provide for all its needs; therefore it would give its days and nights to science.

### V

And so for the last forty years or more we have been looking to science, working under science, doing our thinking in the terms of science and keeping ourselves submerged in the sordid material that science works with and works on until—

Let us see if we can put down in a word or two just what has happened.

Unquestionably we have added enormously to the world's material wealth. We have made this planet an infinitely more comfortable place to live in than it ever was in the past. If we have not fully replenished the earth we have certainly come very near subduing it. Moreover we have developed our power to grasp and appropriate material things until our environment has widened to almost unbelievable proportions. We are grasping more of the material world and making more of what we grasp than we ever did before. We are making so much of it—many of us—that we have no desire for anything else. We are like little children absorbed in their first moving-picture show; it is difficult to conceive that we shall ever desire anything else.

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And unquestionably while we have been gaining some things we have been losing others. While our devotion to science has wonderfully developed our power to grasp and appropriate matter there has been a corresponding deterioration of the senses with which we grasp and appropriate spirit. In vast multitudes these senses have almost disappeared. Many people to-day no longer attempt to use their inner senses; they are not conscious that they have any use for them. Fifty years ago when we wanted to get the goodness out of a poem we feasted upon its beauty with our spiritual eyes; we listened to its message with our spiritual ears; we sucked its sweetness with our spiritual mouths; to-day multitudes are content to get what they can out of a poem by exhaustively examining its structure with their material senses. This is just as true of our treatment of history, of much that we call art, of almost everything that has a spirit. My mother used to feast upon faith, hope, love, truth, courage, gentleness, kindness, heroism, sacrifice and all the other beautiful things of the land of the spirit with her inner vision. And a wonderful vision she had. She had developed it until she could see as far as the throne of God. To-day under the direction of a materialistic science many of us turn only our intellectual eyes upon these things and are content to examine them as psychological phenomena having a physiological basis.

Moreover, by devoting all our thoughts and hopes and energies to science and scientific achievement year after year we have succeeded in creating an

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atmosphere so dense with materialism that it is almost impossible for any spiritual vision or sound to pass through it. Up-to-the-minute magazine writers living in the atmosphere of the average prosperous American are telling us that we don't know about God or the hereafter any more. Few of us pause to reflect that in the atmosphere of the average prosperous American, unless something happens—a cataclysm or something—one is no more likely to become conscious of God or a hereafter than a pig who has gotten all four feet into the trough and is rooting up to his eyes in the corn.

This is not all, but it is enough. This is what overmuch science has done for us. Not science, but our overdose of science. In our frenzy to make the most of the greatest remedy that man ever discovered we threw away our spoon and our discretion and drank it out of the bottle.

## IX

### IS REASON THE HIGHEST COURT OF APPEAL?

#### I

**I** HAVE known many persons who insisted that as reasonable beings it was their duty to settle everything at the court of reason, but I never knew but one man who consistently and persistently did it. He was a little frozen-up fellow with a couple of light blue glass beads for eyes, and his words bit like a conductor's puncher. If you had gone to him to talk about religion he would have turned those two beads on you and said:

"See here! Reason is reason. If you've got a reasonable proposition I'll consider it. But if it's unreasonable I don't touch it. That's my way. If you've got a religion that's got reason in it, something with no fool mysteries about it—if it's good goods and the price is right—fire away."

And he would have turned to his desk and you wouldn't have gotten another word.

That was his way. It was always his way. Whatever else he might be he was always consistent. If, just as you were taking your leave, a poor bedraggled fellow who looked like the world had run over him and mashed his spirit and a month's sleep



out of him, had come in and started to beg for more time on his note, you would have heard the conductor's puncher bite away precisely as it did before:

"Reason is reason. Business is business. Your note is due the tenth. You can pay four-tenths down, three tenths three months, three tenths six. Take it or leave it."

But even this man—the only perfectly reasonable man I have ever known—fell from grace at last. By an unaccountable providence a beautiful girl found her way to his little shriveled-up heart before it was too late and he instantly became the most unreasonable man in the community. It was simply outrageous the way he did. If a poor widow couldn't meet her note he cancelled it and sent it to her with a barrel of flour and his compliments. If a palsied, hard-hit veteran whose life was not worth twenty-five cents a year to the community took to his bed he would spend five dollars worth of his time every day looking after the old fellow's comfort, not to speak of the cash that was always slipping out of his right hand without his left hand finding it out. He even allowed himself to get married and take a wedding trip at the busiest time of the year, and then, to cap the climax of unreason, he became a Christian. To-day if you should ask that man how he succeeded in convincing himself that religion was reasonable he would say:

"See here! I quit that nonsense long ago. I no more think of asking whether this or that about my religion is reasonable than I think of asking whether this or that about my wife is reasonable.

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Of course a woman is unreasonable; but if you love her real hard you'll say, 'What's that got to do with it?' And of course religion is unreasonable; but if you are loving God and your fellow man real hard you'll say the same thing."

Since that little frozen-up man thawed out I have known one other man who honestly tried to conform his life to the dictates of reason. He didn't succeed, but he tried. Of course I have known a great many people who conformed themselves to the dictates of reason without trying, whenever the dictates of reason conformed to what they wanted to do or what they preferred to believe; but that is another matter. I say I have known one other man who honestly tried to conform his life to the dictates of reason. He was a sincere man and he felt that as religion was the most important thing in life he ought to begin by making his religion conform to reason. And so he took his Bible and all his inherited beliefs into court and asked reason to review them. When the job was done and he had taken an inventory of what was left he found the lids of his Bible intact, and between them quite an assortment of mutilated but still beautiful myths, several odd scraps of folk-lore and a few interesting superstitions. He also found that in the place of his old belief in revelation he had been graciously provided with a firm faith in evolution, and that in the place of the doctrine of salvation he had a solid scientific assurance of the survival of the fittest. Moreover, he had the satisfaction of being able to say that while we no longer know about God and

immortality we can hope for the best, and that in any event while waiting for these mysteries to be solved we shall have enough to do attending to such practical duties as reason may officially endorse, such as working for cleaner streets, pure milk for babies, the prevention of poverty and the eradication of the hookworm.

This man kept on submitting the things of religion to the court of reason until his religious faith was so rationalized that it was of no more use to his spiritual life than a sum in arithmetic. He did it because he thought he ought to do it. Believing that reason was supreme he felt that as an honest man he must be faithful to it even if it required him to give up the last vestige of his religion and abandon God as a myth. Yet the moment this man turned toward everyday life his duty to reason passed out of his conscience and he utterly refused to be governed by its dictates. While submitting his religion to the court of reason he was glad to accept the doctrine of the survival of the fittest; but when reason came to him in everyday life and insisted upon the same doctrine he laughed his new god to scorn. Instead of encouraging only the fit to survive and leaving all the unfit to perish, as reason dictated, he became an enthusiastic leader in a multitude of charitable efforts for all sorts of "shot-ups" and hopeless wrecks such as appeal only to the unreasoning hearts of men. The last time I saw him he was gathering linen rags to bind up the fragmentary humans that were wallowing in their blood on the battlefields of Europe.

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### II

Reason supreme! Was there ever a greater illusion? When has reason shown itself supreme? What has it ever done to call for our adoration? When did a man ever succeed in subjecting himself to the rule of reason without becoming dehumanized? After all the praise we have lavished upon it who of us has the slightest idea of putting himself under its rule? Who cares to conform to reason except when one's reason happens to conform to what his heart wants him to do or wants him to believe? And where is the man who ever insisted that his religious creed should conform to reason except when he wanted to get rid of the creed he had?

Again I ask, what has reason done for us? Has it ever led us to the highest and best things? Has it ever led us to choose the path of heroism, of self-sacrifice, of love? Has it ever helped us to flower out into the highest possibilities of manhood? Can you think of a single truly great life that was marked out and guided by pure reason? Haven't the men who have done great things done them often in spite of reason? Did reason ever make a man die for his country? Do men ever become great until they dare to turn aside from reason to follow some unaccountable impulse from within?

And when a man says that everything must conform to reason what does he mean? Does he mean universal reason? There is no universal reason. You can count upon your fingers all the points that

are reasonable to everybody under the sun at all times. What is reasonable to half the world is unreasonable to the other half. What was reasonable yesterday is unreasonable to-day. What is reasonable under some circumstances appears utterly unreasonable under other circumstances. What is wisdom to a lover is always foolishness to a crusty bachelor. Will your capitalists and your labourers think alike? Will the reason of the masses and the reason of the classes ever agree? When you say that your religion must conform to reason whose reason do you mean? Don't you mean your own reason? And if your own reason is supreme, pray what do you want with a religion? If your reason is supreme your reason is God: what else do you want? Isn't that the inevitable logic of it? Can you make anything supreme without deifying it?

Where did we get the idea that reason alone can settle all questions? I know that the rationalist has sung the praises of the mind of man until it is difficult to think of it without falling down in worship before it; but there is a vast difference between the mind of man and the minds of men. I am never moved to adoration by watching the minds of men at their daily work. I do not deny that we have the power, as the rationalist tells us, to think like gods, but do we think like gods? Do we usually think even as ordinary mortals are expected to think? Do we not give our thoughts to those things which require the least thought? Are we not serious over trifles and do we not trifle over the things that are serious? Are these minds of ours which we are

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assured are so many gods, usually engaged in thoughts worthy of gods? When all the world is thinking of one thing, is it not pretty sure to be a trifling thing? And when we would have men give their minds to a worthy thought do we not have to raise money and start a campaign and employ speakers and flood the land with literature? Great is the mind of man! But the minds of men! Heavens! Mention society: do we begin to think of great social problems, or do we think of receptions and operas and the last ball? Mention politics: do we think of principles, or do we think of spoils? Mention religion: do we think of God, or do we think of churches and pastors and aid societies and silver teas? Do we wear away the grey matter of our brains thinking the thoughts of Plato or Socrates or Paul or Christ, or do we wear ourselves out speculating upon the coming prize-fight or the inauguration ceremonies or next season's baseball?

But grant to all mankind the mind of a Plato, could the world's reason settle all questions? Could it settle any of our higher questions? After magnifying the mind of man for half a century science has turned squarely around and reminded us that the human brain is purely a material machine made for a purely material and selfish purpose: that is, it was developed not in a struggle toward the spiritual, not in efforts to help one's fellow men, but in millenniums of struggle for a material, selfish existence. The brain has been so long in this struggle that it just naturally works toward a material and selfish

end. Whether that is true or not we cannot deny that our own reason pushes so powerfully and so persistently in these directions that we cannot turn toward a spiritual or an unselfish goal without using all the forces we can muster. The only way we can obey an impulse to do a manly deed—a heroic, loving, self-sacrificing deed—is to plunge in before reason can spring forward to oppose us. The human reason is so unspiritual that it cannot even grasp the things that lie along the border between matter and spirit. Take music. There comes a time even in music when we must drop our minds and fall back upon something—something that isn't mind. Imagine a company of reasonable men, all born deaf, gathered together to discuss what happens in the world of music. Will reason settle their questions? Reason will tell them that the world of music does not exist. Take love. What can reason do with love? Imagine a company of crusty but reasonable old bachelors, all motherless from babyhood, engaged in a scientific investigation of mother love. Will reason settle their questions? Reason will lead them to reduce mother-love to a chemical formula and to the conclusion that kissing one's baby is a senseless practice which ought to be forbidden by law. Imagine a reasonable miser trying to justify the conduct of a philanthropist. Imagine a company of cane-sucking cowards gathered in a club room to pass upon the heroism of a college-mate who went down into a burning mine to rescue a common labourer. Would reason prove a satisfactory court of final resort?

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### III

Everybody is familiar with the wonderful phenomenon known as conversion. It is still a phenomenon, though in the course of a lifetime one happens upon it a thousand times. We never get used to the sight. Yonder is a young man plunging headlong down toward perdition. He has long ago lost all control of himself and to the eyes of reason there can be but one end. But suddenly he is brought up with a jerk and the next moment we see him on his feet struggling resolutely back up the hill again. Yonder lies a poor, miserable, vile-smelling, hopeless fragment of humanity wallowing in the dust. He has been wallowing for twenty years. Suddenly he stops and looks up. A strange light comes into his eyes, a strange cry bursts from his lips and he springs to his feet and starts off on a run. He is going back to life; going to live; going to be a man; going to be a living sacrifice—a hero in the service of God and his fellow men. You stand and watch him until he vanishes in the distance and you say to yourself:

“This is contrary to all law and all reason; what does it mean?”

You recall all the wonderful phenomena you witnessed in the laboratory at college, but you can think of nothing that was like that. Nothing that you can think of among all the material phenomena which science recognizes in human existence is like it. Nothing that you can think of that men call natural or reasonable is like it. There are indeed certain



phenomena associated with it which you have seen elsewhere, but the great phenomenon itself is something wholly unique. That marvellous turning of a prostrate human fragment into an upright living man was not brought about by a physical change, though physical phenomena were unquestionably present. It was not brought about by an intellectual change, though mental phenomena were unquestionably present. Clearly something else happened—something beyond the physical, something outside of and above the intellect. What was it? What was it that happened? And where did it happen?

As you think over it it suddenly occurs to you that while the phenomenon was different from anything you had witnessed in the laboratory or studied in your textbooks it did not seem so different from certain phenomena you had witnessed in life—at certain high, luminous points in life. Your mind runs back to a little cabin on the edge of a far-away mountain cove where thirty years ago the son of a benighted mountaineer had been seized with a sudden strange impulse, and in response to that impulse had tied his belongings in a bag, hung the bag on the end of a stick, flung the stick over his shoulder, started out to find the world, had found it, had found himself, had gotten an education and had risen to be one of the greatest spiritual forces of the nation. You recall the story of a poor shriveled hulk of humanity who awoke one night out of a drunken stupor in the slums of New York, found his way into a rescue mission, was sent West, started life anew and for twenty years was the leading spirit in

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every great movement for God and humanity in his section of the State.

"What is this phenomenon?" you ask yourself. "It is not physical. It is not mental. It is not a growth. It is too quick for that. Often it is as quick as a flash. Often it *is* a flash. What is it?" And then it occurs to you that most of the immortal deeds of history had their origin in this inward flash. The great things of life, the great impulses, the great visions, the great ideals, the great sacrifices, the great heroes, the great lovers of men and servants of God and men were not reasoned out at all: they were born—born from above!

And your heart kindles at the thought. You don't know why, but somehow you feel that you have reached the truth at last. Born from above! Only little things come out of matter; great things come out of spirit. Only little things are reasoned out, planned out and manufactured; great things are born—born from above! And in that supreme, luminous moment you say to your heart: "Henceforth I will take my questions about the little things of matter and of intellect to reason, but the real questions of life—the questions about the things of the spirit, about the things that are born from above, I will take to the courts that are above reason—to my intuition, to my heart, to the all-wise Spirit, the Supreme Judge of All."

### IV

I wish we could remember that this great illusion was developed not in the atmosphere of life but in

the atmosphere of the laboratory. In the laboratory what men call life is little more than mental activity. The aims of the laboratory life are all intellectual. Its conquests are all conquests of mind. But when we come out of the laboratory and begin to live we find that life, instead of being a smooth-flowing current confined to the narrow channel of the intellect, is a vast, surging sea. We find that life consists not so much in thinking as in feeling. Men go this way and that not because they think but because they feel. The intellect has its place, but it is only a servant's place, never a master's. Men don't listen to the dictates of reason so much as to the whisperings of that strange nebulosity around the brain which we call intuition, or to that stranger something beyond it which we call heart or soul, or spirit, sometimes the Inner Voice, sometimes the Spirit of God. At college we wear our brains out in a ceaseless effort to choose between conflicting thoughts, theories, creeds, philosophies, on the assumption that our future depends upon steering our boat in conformity with reason—as though life consisted in the worship and service of reason. We are sure that the human brainbox is the supreme courtroom of the universe. But we have hardly plunged into life before we find ourselves pausing to smile at the poor figure our brain cuts when it comes to the highest and best things in life.

If we don't make the discovery before we are sure to make it when we fall in love. Here is Marie. Marie has a magnificent mind, perfectly poised. And in dealing with the material side of life she always

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makes the most of it. In material things she is never visionary, never unreasonable. Her strong common sense gives one a comfortable sense of solidity. Yet the moment she turns to the world of spirit she becomes utterly unconcerned about the dictates of reason. She prefers to listen to another voice—a voice that belongs to the world of spirit and is qualified to speak of its affairs. In other words, she follows the promptings of her loving heart—a heart that is dominated by Supreme Love—and she dares to follow them even when they fly into the face of reason.

When we look upon Marie we remember that what is true of her beautiful deeds is true of all the immortal deeds that illumine and adorn the history of mankind. The deeds that will never die—deeds of love, heroism, self-sacrifice—were not reasoned out; they were done often in the face of reason. The intellect was called in as a servant to work out the details but that was all; the deeds themselves came from beyond the brain. Men do great things not because they have brains but because they have unaccountable impulses, inspirations, heart-throbs.

What then? Let us stop worrying ourselves to death over this problem of equipping ourselves for life with a reasonable philosophy or a reasonable creed. What difference does it make whether we succeed in adjusting our beliefs to the demands of a scientifically trained mind or not? The men and women who have lived the fullest, richest lives never governed themselves by their minds, whether they were scientifically trained or not. They did not

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guide themselves : they were guided—guided by love, the most unreasonable thing in this world. Life has never accorded with reason and never will. Human experience does not conform to reason. The heart of mankind does not yield to the demands of reason. Life doesn't consist in thinking. To live is to love and to love is to live. Love, not reason, is the ruler of the universe, and if we would live—live life to the full—we must submit ourselves to the rule of love—Supreme Love!

## X

### AFTER ALL, WHAT IS RELIGION?

#### I

THE other day I read a book in which a very clever writer made an earnest plea for a revision of Christianity. All the way through the reader was told over and over again with ever-increasing emphasis and fervour that Christianity had outlived its usefulness, that it is a threadbare garment, and that unless it is overhauled and remodelled to meet the requirements of modern intelligence the world will be forced to cast it aside. Yet I had not read a dozen pages before I began to suspect that this clever pleader for a remodelled Christianity was not thinking about Christianity at all, and before I read another dozen I found that he was building his argument upon the assumption that religion is simply a system of faith, and that Christianity in his mind was synonymous with the Christian's creed!

I do not mention this as something uncommon. I mention it because it is just now so common that we have ceased to notice it. Every book of this type that I have seen in recent years is based upon the very same illusion. If we may judge by what we see of them in print all these modernists who are raging against the Church because the Church refuses to "revise Christianity" to meet the demands

of modern intelligence owe their rage to their inability to see any difference between Christianity and the Christian's creed. The world, they tell us, is hungry for religion—hungrier than it has ever been before—and yet when it asks the Church for bread it receives a stone. Instead of giving men a religion that will satisfy their intelligence she offers them a creed that is an insult to intelligence! And thus they go on storming against Christianity, when the thing that they have in mind is not Christianity at all but only the Christian's creed.

Christianity a creed! As if the mission of Christ was to the brains of men! As if he came into the world to provide the world's intellectuals with a satisfying system of thought! As if a heart-starved, sin-sick humanity only needed another dose of philosophy to get it on its feet! As if——

Yes, I understand. Christianity *has* a creed, but that is another matter. That doesn't mean that Christianity *is* a creed. It is true that the Bible lays great stress upon faith, but nowhere does it tell us that religion consists in believing things. The Bible never lays any stress upon intellectual belief; indeed it only mentions it to show what an empty thing it is: "The devils believe and tremble." Jesus never laid any stress upon intellectual belief. The rabbis had done that for generations and the world was none the better for it. Jesus came not to get men to believe things with their heads but to get them to believe *in* something with their hearts. He wanted men to put their trust in the Father and he wanted them to put their trust in himself that he

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might bring them into right relations with the Father.

It seemed to me a very pitiful thing—this man's earnest plea for a religion that would meet the needs of modern intelligence. I once knew a young fellow who was very happy in the love of a very lovable girl. One day it occurred to him that his Mary was not sufficiently intellectual for the career he had chosen. What he needed was a wife who would satisfy his intelligence. It is an old story. The girl with the requisite qualifications soon appeared and the transfer was duly effected; but when the leisure necessary for repentance came he discovered, what other men had discovered before him, that while a feminine icicle may meet the demands of modern masculine intelligence it is neither very nourishing nor very satisfying. When a young man asks concerning a beautiful girl whether she will satisfy the demands of his intelligence he may be following the path of reason, but he is not following the promptings of wisdom. If he would take counsel of wisdom—the wisdom that is born of experience—he would be told that what he needs is not a wife who will meet the demands of his mentality, but a wife who will meet the demands of his heart—his soul; his essential being. A wife may satisfy a man's intellect but starve *him* to death. So when men ask of a religion whether it will conform to the demands of a scientifically trained mind, they are wide of the mark. What I need is not a religion that will satisfy my intellect or intelligence but a religion that will satisfy *me*.



II

It is humiliating to reflect that after all these centuries of experimenting we Christians are still living such poor, indefinite lives that people find it difficult to agree as to just what Christianity means. It would be discouraging but for one mitigating fact: we are no longer in doubt as to some things it is not. That is something to be thankful for. People nowadays no longer imagine that being a Christian consists in doing things to bring God under obligations to them. Nor are they as prone as they once were to mistake an aid to religion for religion itself. Many good people still think of ritual observance with reverence, but most of them think of it as an aid to religion, not as religion. We still believe in listening to sermons and contributing to missions and doing church work, but we believe in them as aids to religion; we do not imagine that they are religion. Many things which were once thought of as religion or ingredients of religion we now know do not constitute religion any more than the moss-edged stones that hedge in a beautiful spring constitute the spring. I do not say that they are to religion merely what a hedge of stones is to a spring, but they are not religion. We know they are not religion because we often find them widely separated from it. Sometimes indeed they are antagonistic to it—as when a man persuades himself that if he is faithful to his Sunday duties he can do as he pleases the rest of the week, or as when a woman falls into the delusion that as she is very busy working for

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her church she need not give herself any anxiety about the state of her heart.

But while the world has been slowly sloughing off these medieval ideas it still clings persistently to the notion that the Christian religion consists in forms or formulas, or in forms *and* formulas—in certain unusual things which we accept with our minds or do with our hands. We still like to do our religious thinking with our backs turned upon the land of the spirit. And this doubtless is another reason why the world is so uncertain as to just what our religion means. But we can no more have religion outside of the land of the spirit than we can have physical life outside of the land of matter. If we are going to worship God at all we must worship him in spirit and in truth. If we were animals that would be another matter. An animal does not need to worship God in spirit and in truth. You can let loose a healthy fawn in a forest perfectly adapted to his material needs, and the chances are that he will develop normally into mature deerhood. You can let loose a boy in an environment perfectly adapted to his material needs and the chances are that he will *not* develop normally into mature manhood. The fawn needs nothing but a perfect material environment; give him that and he will follow the law of his nature as straight as he follows his nose. The boy needs something more than a perfect material environment, and if he does not get it you can never be sure that he will follow either the law of his nature or his nose. His instinct and intuition combined are not as strong as the instinct of a

fawn, and, besides, there is something more than his body to provide for.

We cannot get around the fact that man is an animal plus something that no material environment, however perfect, can satisfy; rather he is that something plus an animal. That something is not self-sustaining, because it starves. We can feel it starve; and when the world around us is quiet, we can hear its cry for food. You have sat at your library table alone in the twilight and heard that cry, and you have picked up a book and looked for something that had stilled the cry before, and you have read until all was quiet again. Evidently that something was fed. The longing you have so often felt to go to the country and wander in the fields at sunset, to linger among the graves in the country churchyards, to visit old home scenes, to sit alone on the highest crag of a mountain peak—this longing, you have recognized as simply the hunger of that something within for its proper food. That food, you and I have long since learned, cannot be found in the markets; it only comes from the world to which that something belongs. Many a time we have wandered, or lingered, or sat alone, and thought of loved ones that have gone before, and watched the sunset and waited for the stars to come out—all with the hope that we might presently find a place in the thin partition which separates matter from spirit to which we could put our ears and listen to the voices beyond.

We simply must get in touch with something beyond matter. Spirit is the one real thing in us—

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the thing that wants to last—and we can no more live without a spiritual environment than we can live without a physical environment. To bring the spirits of men into the land of the spirit where they can breathe and feed and live and have life more abundantly, is the supreme problem of humanity. It was this problem that brought Jesus into the world. Jesus did not believe that men were dying for want of something to believe. He knew that they were dying simply for want of life. The souls of men, suffocated beneath an overwhelming material environment, had no more chance to live than helpless babies with wet blankets thrown over their faces. And he came to bring life. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

### III

This and this alone is the religion of Jesus: a *life*. Not a creed, not a philosophy, not a system of ethics, not a method of reform, but a life; the life which we live through Christ with God as our Father and, as a natural consequence, with our fellow men as our brothers.

Let me see if I can make my meaning plain. Let us imagine ourselves earnest seekers after God. We have been told that the surest way to find God is to look for Him who is the express image of his person. And we have given ourselves to the quest of Jesus. Not to the quest of a reasonable faith—our hearts have long since told us that this is not what we are hungry for—but the quest of Jesus.

We have searched the Scriptures to find Jesus. We have looked for him in the faces and lives of men and women around us who are said to carry his spirit in their hearts. We have tried to push aside our overwhelming, suffocating material environment and cry out to him in prayer. We have thought of him by day and dreamed of him by night and our hearts have yearned for him as we have gone seeking him everywhere. And one day as we are sitting alone in a quiet place brooding over his words we suddenly become conscious that he is speaking to us. "You have been searching for God," he says gently. "Look!" And he holds up before us a wonderful light and in that light we look upon the heart of God. And then we make the most wonderful discovery in the world. We discover that God is our Father. And then Jesus begins to open up the way to the Father for us. We need not worry over the mystery of it; it is enough for us to know that he does it. In that light which he still holds up before us we see ourselves for the first time just as we are—all covered over with sin,—and we feel like falling upon our faces. And then he takes us by the hand and leads us to the Father and we cast ourselves at his feet. And soon we hear the Father's voice and we know that our sins are forgiven and that our hearts are cleansed and made over again and that we are beginning all over again. We are beginning to live a new life. We don't know how it has happened, but we are conscious that a new life has come into us that is not our own, and that we have come into a new land—the land of the spirit.

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'And in this new land we have a new vision and we realize that the real values in life are not material but spiritual; that the Supreme Good is God and that the chief end of man is to walk with God. And so we take the Father's hand and begin to walk with him as Jesus walked with him. That is, we fall in with God. We fall in with his will and plans. We harmonize with him; we keep step with him; we think and feel and work and love in unison with him.

But this is not all. When we walk out into the world with God as our Father, keeping step with him, going where he goes, thinking as he thinks, wishing his wishes, loving what he loves, we make another wonderful discovery. We look into the faces of the men we meet and then we look up into his face and we discover that they are our brothers. Until this moment we have seen men as trees walking; now we see our flesh and blood. And then—as a natural consequence of walking with God as our Father—we come to walk with our fellow men as our brothers. And this—this life which Christ gives us the power to live with God as our Father and which keeps us in brotherly relations with one another—this is religion.

Is it too simple? No doubt a philosophy would be more satisfying to our intelligence, but who wants a new philosophy when one can have a new life? What use have we for a philosophy if we can spend life's day in the presence of the Father where every man we meet is a brother?

## XI

### WHY HAS CHRISTIANITY FAILED TO "WORK" IN GOVERNMENT?

#### I

**I**T ought to go without saying that there is but one answer to this question. Christianity has not failed to "work" in government. It hasn't for the simple reason that it has never been tried. One of these days we are going to try it. One of these days we, the people of these United States, are going to rise in our might and solemnly proclaim and declare ourselves forever free from the tyranny of force. We are going to cast aside the big stick, and we are going to see what we can do in the way of self-government under the rule of love. We are going to set an example to the nations of the earth and break through the shell of paganism and try Christianity.

But thus far, as I have said, we have never tried it. Are there no Christian nations in the world? No; there are nations of Christians, but not a single Christian nation. As a unit civilized man conducts himself as a decent Christian; but as a fraction, whether the fraction of a community or a mob or a party or a nation, he is still a pagan. For three hundred years Christians thought that Christianity was good for everything; but when they came to

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face the problem of conducting a nation under the rule of love, they weakened and reached back for the big stick, and for sixteen hundred years Christian men have been conducting the affairs of nations on pagan principles.

We Christians have financed and officered and soldiered every war that has been fought between civilized nations in the last sixteen hundred years or thereabout. And we are still at the business. And when there are no wars and no chance to give the big stick its scarlet bath, we take it up to the legislature and to Congress and set to work to brain our fellow men by bloodless measures. We demand this law and that to force this man out of existence and to force that man to be good. We multiply laws to reach everything we hate, for this war spirit within us must be quenched. If people won't be good we will make them be good. In war we Christians kill men and send all the bad ones among them to perdition without a chance to cry for mercy. In Congress and in our legislatures we are often engaged in the same business, only by different methods. We must have laws; but much of our modern craze for more legislation is a savage madness. It is a reversion to type, a reversion to the day when we brained our neighbours with the big stick. It is simply another form of fratricidal strife. We are always engaged in war of one sort or another. And we are not ashamed of it. If we were, we would teach our children the names of a few heroes that were not warriors. If we were, we would put in their hands school histories that are something more than stories



of bloody battles. Ask a boy to name the world's greatest heroes and he will name all the big fighters he can think of from Alexander the Great to Jack Johnson. Ask him to name the world's greatest men and he will give you his list of fighters again, and add Mr. Edison. Edison is the only great man of peace he can think of.

As a people we do not believe in the reign of love; we believe in the reign of force. And we do not believe in union in love; we believe in the great American Union, and some of us believe in the labour union, and some of us believe in a united party, but we do not want any other unions. We prefer things that can be dissolved. We like the fun of dissolving things. That is why we have trusts, and that is why some people do not care for marriage unions, but dote on marriage co-partnerships, like John & Mary Smith, Limited.

## II

Now, I am a Christian myself, and I think I know what I am talking about. We Christians as a people do not follow Jesus. I am not talking about individuals. I know a few men and women here and there who do follow him. They have taken him absolutely at his word, and have let him unite them in love with the Father and their fellow men—all their fellow men, white, yellow, red, brown and black. And they have found that they can be unselfish without starving, and that they can usually make their way through this world without the use of brute force. But as a people we Christians do

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not know anything about the power of love. We have never tried it. Men tell me that Christianity has been tested in America and that it has failed. I deny that it has ever been tested and I demand the proof. I know a little American history, and I have been trying to recall a time when Christian America, or any considerable part of it, ever spent one whole day putting Christianity to the test. The Pilgrims came over to test it, but the moment they got out of reach of persecution they forgot and fell to persecuting the saints who disagreed with them. Boston set up to try it, but forgot and hung four Quakers, including a saintly Quaker sister, for preaching the gospel of peace in its streets. Roger Williams tried it and found that it worked. William Penn tried it at Shackamaxon when he talked love to the big Indian chiefs and smoked the pipe of peace with them and paid them for their lands. And it worked. Oglethorpe tried it when he organized the Christian state of Georgia, but he soon forgot and went down to Florida to kill the Spanish. And the Cavaliers—but no; they never tried it and I do not believe they ever pretended to. And just now I cannot think of any more. Where are the proofs that Christianity has been tried in America and has failed? What particular part of America is trying it to-day? What association of employers is trying it on the workingman? What association of workingmen is trying it on the employer? What trust is trying it on the little manufacturer? And what little manufacturers are trying it on the trust? By what means are the big interests and the little

interests seeking to unite in love? What city ever tried to run its affairs on a basis of love, except when it was burning up or when it was rocked by an earthquake?

## III

Why is it that we Christians as a people do not follow Jesus? Why do we not renounce force in favour of love? There is an excuse and there is a reason: I will give you the excuse; the reason you may guess if you can. The excuse is that Jesus did not mean just what his words seem to mean. We are sure he did not, for Jesus himself used force. When did he use force? When he drove the traders out of the temple. And to prove it we point to the picture of a Galilean zealot driving a gang of terror-stricken tradesmen before him with a cowhide! We Christians wouldn't take a billion dollars for that picture. It has been our solace and comfort through all the terrible wars we have fought in the last sixteen hundred years, and it still serves us as a conscience soother in many a little tempestuous affair of our own. And we never question it. An editor of renown recently held it up in triumph before a brilliant contributor in final proof that his distinguished antagonist was wrong in opposing the use of force, and that peaceful gentleman, whose genius for biblical interpretation is some thousands of miles behind his genius for muckraking and literature, at once threw up his hands and fell back upon the horrible assumption that Jesus must have lost his temper. But I dare to say even in the presence

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of both of these renowned exegetes that Jesus did not make use of force either in the temple or out of it.

One of John Wesley's preachers, whose piety was equalled only by his eccentricity, went from village to village ringing a handbell and crying fire. When people asked him where the fire was he would point downward—where they would all go, he said, if they didn't look out. He did not mean any harm; he simply wanted to warn sinners of what was coming and incidentally draw a good congregation. It was a crude attempt to adapt one of the methods of the ancient prophets to eighteenth century conditions. The old prophets were liberal users of object lessons, which helped to rivet attention and drive the truth home. One of them I remember made a pair of horns and pushed them before him. But he never hurt anybody.

Jesus wanted to rivet attention in that noisy crowd of traders and drive the truth home. He picked up a few bits of broken cords—"small" cords, mind you—and tied them together. Then he held his little harmless whip aloft and advanced upon them.

"Take these things hence!" he cried; "make not my father's house a house of merchandise."

That was all. And that was enough: they understood and they obeyed. He did not strike them with his little whip. If he had descended to their level and used brute force their awe for him would have vanished and they would have turned upon him like brutes. Jesus never used physical force. *He didn't have to.*

## IV

I believe that the religion of Jesus will work anywhere. I believe that the law of love, which unites men to God and to one another, is the greatest power in the universe, and that we shall never reach man's estate until we have left brute force to brutes and learned to make the most of the highest power in all the relations of life. Love has worked whenever and wherever we have tried it, though we have tried it only on a small scale. If it works on a small scale, there is no reason why it should not work on a large scale. It has worked with bears and lions and tigers and even snakes. A castaway on a lonely island, longing for something to love, has talked to a snake and made the cold thing understand that he wanted his love even if he did not have a warm heart, and the snake has drawn in his fearful forked tongue and allowed himself to be wooed and won, and has stretched himself out on the sand and gone to sleep, leaving his life at the mercy of his ancient enemy. If it works with bears and lions and tigers and snakes, I believe it will work with the Russian Bear and the British Lion and even the Tammany Tiger and the slickest human snake that ever lurked in the political grass. I really believe it.

When you were a boy you had a Bible storybook, and facing the title-page was a picture of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Adam had his right arm around Eve and he rested his left hand on a lion's mane. And all around him stood a free menagerie of wild beasts, all with the gentleness of

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a spring morning in their eyes. When you grew older you laughed at that picture, but that was for want of better sense. To-day you know that picture told the truth, the sublimest truth in all the world. For now you know the power of love along the whole scale of creation, from the savage beast in the forest to the beautiful woman at your side.

The ancient prophet looked forward to a day when love should unite all things. He could see in the distance the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the leopard lying down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling standing in the shade together, and presently he could see a little child leading them off to water. Of course he was careful to add that the lion's tastes had changed and that he was eating straw like an ox. That explains the whole matter. It shows what love can do. You would not mind taking that picture literally. You can conceive of circumstances under which it might happen. But the old prophet did not want us to take it literally, for he meant something better than that. If he were in America to-day, he would say nothing about wolves and lambs and leopards and calves and lions. He would ask us to look forward to a day when the law of love should be given such a chance to work in America that the poor man could safely dwell with the money-lender, and the little manufacturer could lie down with the big trust, and innocent human calves could trust themselves in the hands of their representatives in Congress. When that day comes, even a little child—anybody, anything as pure as a little child—will be able to lead

them, whereas to-day under our rule of force even Uncle Sam with all his courts and ships and soldiers cannot do it.

Believest thou the prophets? I do. I really do. Do I mean to say that America should at once abolish all force and depend solely upon love to keep us in the narrow path henceforth and forever? No. There is not enough love in America to depend on. I will not sell my cage for old iron before I have tamed my lion. I will not pull out the old machinery before I have begun to install the new. But I do mean that America should abolish force just as rapidly as it can set love to work; and we can do it faster, for an ounce of love will take the place of a hundredweight of force any day.

I will go further and say that we can abolish force in ten thousand places to-day without waiting for men to open their hearts to the rule of love. We are trying to govern America on the plan of the ancient parent who gave his boy a whipping every morning before breakfast to get him started right, and then whipped him two or three times during the day lest he should forget. We use the big stick where a little love would do just as well. I should not be afraid to abolish half of our laws to-day and trust to the law of love to take their place. The trouble is, we do not make room for love to do its work. We do not give it a chance. There are a hundred thousand men languishing in prison for minor offences, nine-tenths of whom might be out in the sunshine to-day on parole trying to make a new start under the loving oversight of a legally ap-

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pointed "big brother." And yet the law prefers to go on grinding out its monotonous "ninety days" rather than stop for a moment to inquire who is willing to take the oversight of a weaker brother for the next six months.

### V

But how about our relations with other governments? We may get along with our own people on a Christian basis, but how is it possible to obey the teachings of Christ in our dealings with nations that have no regard for Christ? Here is where we are always going wrong. We are always assuming that a nation is something more than an aggregation of individuals. Why don't we ask how it is possible to obey the teachings of Christ in one's dealings with one's godless neighbour? Nobody thinks of asking that question. We know that if Christianity cannot stand the test at that point it is not worth having; and we know that it does stand the test at that point. There are thousands of Christians who do obey the teachings of Christ in their dealings with their godless neighbours. I do not say that they never have any trouble. The teachings of Christ demand that we shall succour the oppressed and that we shall be faithful to our trust and protect at all hazards those whom God has placed under our care. I can easily conceive of circumstances that may require a Christian in carrying out the teachings of Christ to administer a sound thrashing to a godless neighbour. If my godless neighbour should jump on a small boy and try to choke him to death it might be necessary



for me to jump on him. But if I did it as a Christian I would not go further than was necessary to make him release his hold. In other words, I would do it with the godly purpose of succouring the oppressed and not with the ungodly purpose of indulging my fighting propensities, or retaliating, or settling old scores, or giving him what I believed to be his just deserts.

We cannot escape responsibility for our sins by submerging them in the nation, with the hope that God will recognize the nation as a corporation without a conscience and will make no demands upon it. God has never recognized America as a corporation, either with or without a conscience, and it is not likely that he ever will. He knows only the individuals who compose the nation and the only laws we have a right to go by as a nation are the laws he has given us as individuals. If Americans want America to obey the teachings of Christ in its dealings with other nations America can obey them. That does not mean that we should never have any trouble. I can easily conceive of circumstances which might require us as a Christian nation to give a godless neighbour a sound thrashing. But how many really good Christians do you know who ever found it necessary to give a godless neighbour a sound thrashing?

## VI

But let us not deceive ourselves. Men who argue that Christianity cannot be made to work in government do not want war as a means to carry out the

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teachings of Christ. War is like the saloon business. We hold on to it not because of this or that principle but solely because some people still imagine that it is lucrative. We long ago decided that as the business of killing men at retail could not be justified the killing of them at wholesale could not be justified. Still the wholesale business goes on. It goes on simply because you cannot kill a business by arguing against it or casting reflections upon it so long as the people who are engaged in it or want to engage in it believe it to be lucrative.

If we could only escape this illusion! All moral questions aside, is war ever a paying business? Is it a profitable thunderbolt that strikes down all the fine young horses on the farm and leaves nothing but superannuated plugs to make the next crop? When the war trump sounds who go forth to battle? The decayed inmates of the Home for the Aged and Infirm? The degenerate parasites from the Bowery? The pestilential burnt-outs from the Private Asylum for Men? The Red Flag Cavalrymen from the tuberculosis camp? The aristocratic battalion of Neurasthenic Blues? No. War is no buzzard. It has no nose for decay. It whiffs the air for the smell of blood—rich, red, living blood—the blood of the young, the strong and the brave. And its unerring scent leads it away from the lifeless top and bottom of society to its sound, living core where human blood is richest—to the great middle class, always the strength and hope of humanity. If war were only a buzzard we might cherish it; but it doesn't attack the putrid spots on the sur-

face of society; it eats out the solid core like a worm.

It is only a question of time with the War Worm. Give it time and it will deprive society of its core not only for our own age but for generations to come; for while the strong and the brave are falling at the front, the children who are coming into the world to succeed them are not their children, but the feeble offspring of the aged and diseased that are kept at home.

If war were as disastrous to the breed of dogs as it is to the breed of men we would banish it to-day.

## XII

### IF THERE IS A GOOD GOD WHY THESE HORRIBLE CALAMITIES?

#### I

**O**F all the questions which the enemy has designed to shake the faith of the average man, this, it seems to me, is the most appalling. No other question that I know of so quickly turns our moisture into the drought of summer. Certainly no other ever raised such a tumult in my own soul or caused me so much mental anguish.

Let us look at it together for a little while, and then I will tell you of an answer that brought relief to my own mind.

If we will look at this question squarely, three significant facts will come into view. The first is that what we call a great calamity is largely a hallucination. A great or extraordinary calamity is really nothing more than an aggregation of ordinary calamities—calamities which, taken separately, seldom give us more than a moment's concern and perhaps never cause us to bring in question the goodness of God. During the four hours over which the catastrophe to the *Titanic* was spread probably twelve or fifteen thousand persons died in different parts of the world, and of these it is safe to say that

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at least sixteen hundred suffered as much anguish, mental or physical, as the sixteen hundred who perished within a radius of a hundred yards of that ill-fated ship. Horrible as that calamity was, it really did not differ essentially from the ordinary calamities which were happening at the same time throughout the world and which have happened on an average of once every four hours for thousands of years. The *Titanic* calamity happens every day, only it is spread out over the world instead of being concentrated at one point. So does the *Lusitania* horror, the Belgian horror and even the Verdun cataclysm. If our faith is not shaken by the world-wide calamity of everyday occurrence, there is no reason why we should be disturbed when the same calamity is concentrated off the Newfoundland coast or the Ireland coast or in Belgium or France. The latter would naturally tear our hearts more, but it should not disturb our faith more.

### II

The second fact is that the calamities which disturb our faith most are those in which the innocent are made to suffer for the guilty. I do not think that any one would have thought of questioning the providence or goodness of God in connection with the *Titanic* or the *Lusitania* if the loss of life had been limited to those who were responsible for the wreck. The thing that shocked the faith of the weak was the seeming indifference of God to the fate of the innocent. Of course we have no right to say that God was indifferent to the fate of the innocent, or

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that he stood by with folded hands and refused to help them. If our eyes had been open (as were the eyes of the two disciples at Emmaus when they suddenly looked up into the face of the Stranger at the table), it is quite possible that we would have seen a wonderful exhibition of the tender love of God, such as we have never conceived of. What from this side appeared an unspeakable horror might on the other side have been full of wonderful rescues, glorious awakenings, glad surprises and shouts of joy.

But all this aside. The fact that the innocent suffered in their bodies for or with the guilty in no sense brings into question the goodness of God. Men ask why God should have made the world so that the innocent must suffer with the guilty. God did not make the world so that the innocent must suffer with the guilty. He did indeed make men so that when one man goes wrong others will suffer on account of it, and where one man goes right, others will be blessed on account of it. But if we blame God for this, we shall blame him for making us men instead of tin soldiers.

God might have made a world full of tin soldiers. He might have stood us up each by himself so that each of us could live unto himself and neither affect nor be affected by any one else; but in that case we would not have been men. I am glad that he made me a man. I am glad that he did not make me a tin soldier.

A man is not a detached unit. His value depends upon being attached to humanity just as much as the value of my right eye depends upon its being at-

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tached to my body. Man is tied to humanity with a thousand strings. Cut one of these strings, and he will not be as much a man as he was before. Cut them all, and he will be no man at all. The man who attempts to live unto himself unmans himself, dehumanizes himself. What is left is nothing but a tin soldier.

It is a merit of man, not a defect of creation, that he should be so tied to humanity that he can do nothing, good or bad, that does not affect his fellow men. Suffering with the guilty is the price we pay for being men, and it is one thing that cannot be helped so long as there are men who do evil among us, unless God should remove us from the high estate of manhood to the low plane of tin soldiers. If we had our choice I think we would rather take all the suffering that comes to men in this world as a natural consequence of their union with humanity than be deprived of the privilege of being a unit in the human family. It is something to be a man and not a tin soldier. For one thing, a man can be loved. Even God cannot love a tin soldier.

### III

Still another fact that we often overlook is that nearly all the calamities which shock the world are the natural result of man's disregard of the laws of nature or, rather, the laws of God. Sift out all the catastrophes of a lifetime, and you will be surprised to find how few there are which are not chargeable directly to man. Rarely has a calamity

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been charged to God that some investigating committee has not traced it to man's neglect or defiance of God's laws. Even famines, which we like to call the scourge of God, are ordinarily the result of human neglect. Look down beneath almost any horror and you will find either human neglect, or human ambition, or human defiance, or human greed, or inhuman cruelty, or all the Ten Commandments pulverized together. Probably ninety-nine out of every hundred calamities are due solely to man's flying in the face of Providence, as we sometimes put it. Here and there is a man who is always trying to see how far he can defy the laws of the land without getting hurt. There are not many such men; but there are millions who spend their lives trying to see how far they can defy the laws of nature or the laws of God without getting hurt. In their frenzy to have their own way they attempt to drive directly across God's will, and the moment they get hurt they cry out against God. They want to know why God did not take his laws out of the way when he saw them coming. Half the world is like a gang of reckless boys playing among the moving wheels and belts of a machine shop; only when a boy gets hurt, he is too honest to put the blame on the owner of the shop.

### IV

Ninety-nine out of a hundred! But what about the hundredth? For now and then something does happen which, so far as we can see, cannot be charged to any one but God alone; and when it does



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happen, it cannot be denied that to all human appearances God does seem strangely indifferent. How are we to account for it? Men have tried to reconcile such events to the common belief in God's providence by saying that a great calamity is only a hastening of the process of nature which is steadily leading every man to his own grave, or that it is but a part of the law of life, like the blotting out of a whole colony of ants by the tread of an elephant's foot; but our hearts cry out against such answers. How can God allow these things if he is indeed our Father?

One day as I repeated the question I said to myself: If he is indeed our Father! Isn't the answer in these very words? Is it not because he is our Father that he permits or does things for our good even when he knows we will think that they are for evil? And is it not because we are children that we cannot understand? The fact that things which the Father does or allows appear hard and cruel does not prove that they are hard and cruel; it only proves that we are children and cannot understand.

A story is told of a great surgeon—a crusty old bachelor who had never before known the meaning of love—who became deeply attached to a little orphan child in a hospital. The little thing had had a hard life and had been so often deceived that she could hardly trust any one. But now her little heart went out to the great man; and when he told her that he would protect and care for her and she would soon be well, she believed him. He found that a fearful operation would have to be performed with-

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out the use of an anaesthetic, and he trembled at the thought of undertaking it. He put it off from day to day, trying to get some one else to take his place; but the other surgeons insisted that he was the only man who could undertake it with the slightest chance of success. And so at last he girded himself for his task. It nearly killed him, and it nearly killed the child. But what was worse, the pain he gave her destroyed her confidence in her only friend. He feared this, and for days carefully kept out of her sight. Often he would sit just outside the door and listen and wait, hoping that the child would ask for him; but he waited in vain. At last the old man was so hungry for a glimpse of her that he ventured into her room, but the child screamed out in terror and hid her face in her hands. When I read this story, I said: Is not this picture of the surgeon cutting into the little child's flesh to save her life when he knew that she could not understand a picture of God in his dealings with his children in what we call the mysterious dispensations of Providence? And is not the picture of this child screaming out in terror of the man whose heart is breaking because she mistakes his love for hate a picture of God's children who cry out against his seeming cruelty at the very time that his heart is going out in greatest tenderness for them?

### XIII

## CAN AN INTELLIGENT MAN BELIEVE IN THE SUPERNATURAL?

### I

**W**HY not? Intelligent men have believed in spiritualism, post-futurism, Christian Science, war, the superman, Wall Street, theosophy, ghosts and eugenics. Why should they have any difficulty in believing in the supernatural?

As a matter of fact they do believe in it. Thousands of intelligent men believe that the presence of the supernatural in the world is the only hope of humanity. They have learned enough about the world to know that it has no power to lift itself above itself, and they don't see how it is ever going to be lifted except by something above it—by something beyond nature. Therefore they believe in the supernatural. Not that they want to believe in it: they just don't know how to escape it. If there is nothing beyond nature, then life has no meaning, history is a myth, and our future is one with the pigs that perish.

Still the fact that there are intelligent men who do believe in the supernatural is of no more significance than the fact that there are intelligent men who don't believe in it. What intelligent men believe or don't believe about a thing doesn't necessarily mean anything. Intelligent people believe very much

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like other people; they believe according to the dictates of their hearts rather than according to the dictates of their heads.

But isn't belief in the supernatural incompatible with modern scientific intelligence? No. Belief in the unnatural may be, but that is a different matter. Science has found nothing contrary to nature and it has pursued its investigations far enough to justify the assertion that nothing contrary to nature exists. But science has never gone a hairsbreadth beyond its rightful sphere and it has no opinion as to what may exist beyond nature. It does not say that there is nothing beyond nature. It only says that so far as its investigations have gone there is no indication that anything exists contrary to nature—that there is nothing unnatural. Whether there is anything supernatural—anything beyond nature—or not is a matter with which science is not concerned and one may believe as he chooses. We cannot do violence to modern scientific intelligence either by believing in or refusing to believe in that with which science has nothing to do.

The fact is, every man who really believes in his essential superiority to the pigs that perish believes in the supernatural. We cannot recognize spirit without admitting the supernatural. Spirit could not project itself into nature in accordance with any known law of nature, and if spirit is here it is here by a power that is beyond nature. Besides, of course, spirit itself is something beyond nature. To deny the presence of the supernatural in the world therefore is to deny that spirit has ever come into nature,

which means of course that man has no spirit and that the Great Spirit has never made himself known to us.

II

The other day I had the good fortune to sit at the feet of a very clever scholar who undertook to show his hearers what a beautiful book the Bible would be if it were only stripped of its supernatural element. Having done this to the satisfaction of many he went on to show how naturally God had revealed himself to the hearts of his children of old and especially how naturally he had entered into the open heart of Jesus. Jesus, he said, was the greatest of all because he had opened every channel of his being to God and was more completely filled with the Spirit of God than any other man. And then he went on to give us a little science.

He was a great devotee of science—that man. Yet it never occurred to him that while he was talking about the perfectly natural way in which God had been gradually revealing himself to men he was claiming for the realm of nature a phenomenon which science had never heard of. Science knows nothing of a law by which spirit could project itself into the natural world. Science itself would be compelled to admit that if there is a spiritual world nothing could come from it into the natural world except in a supernatural way.

This good man thought it very absurd to imagine God drawing attention to himself in ancient times by such outrageous violations of science and reason as

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miracles. It seemed so much more worthy of the Deity in every way to think of him as doing honour to his own natural laws and in a perfectly natural way revealing himself gradually to the hearts of men. But I could not see that there was any essential difference between the silent, invisible miracle of gradual revelation through the ages, which he applauded, and the visible, instantaneous miracles, which he execrated. Neither could be performed by natural laws and one was as supernatural as the other. Moreover, I could not help wondering why it should seem more unreasonable for God to draw attention to himself in ancient times by giving those simple people something they could see with their eyes than by speaking to them voicelessly in their hearts. It seemed to me that if a man should come to us to-day claiming to have a new message from God it would take something more than a silent impression on our hearts to make us believe. He would have to do something. And it would have to be something supernatural. If after all these ages of spiritual culture you and I would not receive a new message as supernatural unless it was accompanied by outward supernatural manifestations, why should we think it unreasonable that God should have chosen to get the attention of his people in the child age of the world by doing such wonders before their eyes as children could receive?

### III

For nearly a hundred and fifty years the world has been in the grip of an ingenious piece of sophistry,

perhaps the most powerful piece of mental mechanism ever used to bind the human mind. "Anything"—thus it goes—"that is contrary to human experience and reason is impossible. A miracle is contrary to human experience and reason. Therefore a miracle is impossible." This absurd syllogism owes its power to a prejudice that is as old as mankind. No doubt the primitive man who discovered fire had to contend with it. Fire was something unheard of—something contrary to human experience and reason,—and therefore impossible.

Suppose you had been a boy, say, forty years ago. And suppose you had said to your mother one day:

"Mother, I can't believe this story about Elijah."

And mother without a word had turned to a little cabinet and opened it and brought out a strange-looking book, and said to you:

"Very well, my boy, if you don't like your mother's Bible here is another you may read. Perhaps you will find it easier to believe this one."

And suppose you had opened the strange looking book and had read something like this:

"Now it came to pass when Jacob was old and stricken in years, and about to die, that he sent for his sons that he might bless them. And Joseph went up to the land of Goshen to see his father. And Joseph carried with him an engine of strange device, no bigger than a lamb newly born. And the engine had wheels within and without. And it came to pass as Jacob blessed his sons that Joseph held the engine in his hands; and the wheels did turn. And when Jacob had done blessing his sons Joseph put

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the engine beside him. And after Jacob had been gathered to his fathers Joseph went up and returned from out of the land of Goshen, and he did carry the engine with him. And Joseph kept the engine all his days and left it to his sons. And it was so that when the children of Israel went up out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, that they carried the engine with them. And the priests laid it up in the tabernacle of Israel.

“And it came to pass in the days of Solomon the king that Solomon the king sent and fetched the engine unto him out of the temple. And Solomon took it in his hand and put his hand upon the wheels, and the wheels moved; and behold, the voice of Jacob was heard in the engine blessing his children.

“And there came unto King Solomon a man of Tyre, a worker in iron and brass. And he was filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to do all manner of work. And the man built a tower on the Mount of Olives and set up an engine on the top thereof. And the man arose and went to Tadmor, which is in the wilderness, and built another tower and set up an engine on the top thereof. And the man sat in the tower at Tadmor, and King Solomon arose and went to the tower, which is on the Mount of Olives, and spake; and behold his voice was heard by the man in the tower which is at Tadmor; and the man spake back unto King Solomon and the king heard him.

“And behold there came another man from Tyre to help King Solomon. And the king gave into his



hand the pattern of a ship the like of which had never been seen in any nation. And the man wrought and built the ship according to the pattern which the king gave unto him. And the man arose and went forth and sat in the ship. And he laid his hand upon the wheel which was in the ship; and the ship arose as the eagle that flieth away with a lamb from the flock. And the man went with it, and it ascended unto heaven; and the man was seen no more in Jerusalem from that day. Howbeit he was seen the next day at Damascus."

Now suppose, I say, that you had read this strange story in the strange looking book, and your mother had said to you:

"Now, my boy, take your choice. Which do you think is easier to believe—this book or your mother's Bible?"

What would you have said?

To-day you were saying that you did not believe in miracles because a miracle is contrary to human experience and to reason and therefore impossible; but forty years ago you would have said that the phonograph and the wireless telephone and the flying machine were contrary to human experience and to reason and therefore impossible.

And the phonograph and the wireless telephone and the flying machine *are here*.

But, you say, these things are not miracles; they are explainable in accordance with known laws and a miracle is not. That is true. I have often explained the phonograph—to my own satisfaction—and I have never explained a miracle. But I never

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undertook to explain the phonograph until Mr. Edison told us what he had learned *and how he did it*, and I suppose if God should choose to tell us what he knows and how he did it I could explain his miracles too.

### IV

Fifty years ago, all the world, learned and unlearned, agreed that it was impossible to run a train sixty miles an hour because it was contrary to human experience and reason. Reason said it would take an engineer's breath away. In those days all the scientists were laughing at the fools who were trying to harness electricity; and when that frisky colt was at last made to take the bit, they turned to laugh at the bigger fools who were trying to make heavier-than-air flying machines. To-day the world is run by harnessed electricity, the heavier-than-air machines are darting like birds through the air; and our scientific friends, undaunted, are looking for somebody else to laugh at.

The hold this piece of sophistry has upon the human mind is one of the most marvellous phenomena known to man, and the enemies of Christianity never did a shrewder thing than when they pressed it into service in their fight against the supernatural.

One day I asked myself the question, "How much truth is there in this syllogism?" Admitting it to be true that anything contrary to human experience and reason is impossible, has any living man the right to say that a miracle is contrary to human ex-

perience and reason? What man among us is familiar with the whole range of human experience? And what man among us is wise enough to sit on the bench as chief justice of the supreme court of reason and declare with authority what is and what is not contrary to reason? Would the wisest man in the world go further than to say that a miracle is contrary to known experience and to his own reason? And would such an assertion prove anything? Then the thought came to me: the fact that a miracle is apparently contrary to human experience and reason does not prove that a miracle is impossible any more than the fact that the flying machine was contrary to human experience and reason forty years ago proved that the flying machine was impossible. It only proves that in the matter of miracles we have not "arrived," just as in the matter of flying machines we had not "arrived" forty years ago.

To-day, in the matter of flying machines, we have arrived. The flying machine, as I have said, is here. To-day you laughed at the idea of a miracle. One of these days you and I will arrive—in another land where the light is better; and in that better light God will show us how he did it. And then we shall laugh again—at ourselves and the simplicity of the thing.

I know how many of us feel about it. We would like to say, as many good people have been tempted to say before our day, that it is sheer ignorance that causes so many people to believe in miracles, and that as intelligent persons we cannot afford to take

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this matter seriously. How can any intelligent man take Jonah and the whale seriously?

But let us not go too fast. We have been jumping at conclusions in this matter and it is quite possible that we have blundered, not only about Jonah and the whale but about all the other Old Testament stories that are repugnant to our sensibilities. We too easily forget that the Old Testament is a very old series of books written in a language long since dead and by men whose habits of thought were wholly foreign to ours. We can see very clearly what those old Oriental writers were driving at: they all had wonderful visions of God and his will and they were all trying to tell what they saw. And they were wonderfully successful. You may find contradictions or inconsistencies in their stories, but you will find no contradictions or inconsistencies in the picture of God which you will have in your mind when you have finished with them. They may leave you in the dark as to material facts, but they never leave you in doubt as to the great moral and spiritual truths they intend to teach. But beyond this one can hardly afford to dogmatize. Oriental writers are wonderfully picturesque. They fairly revel in figures of speech. And they never systematize. They don't have a place for everything and put everything in its place. If they want to present the truth in the form of history they write history, but if they should suddenly decide that a truth can be better presented in poetry or parable they fall at once into poetry or parable without so much as making a cross mark to indicate the change.

And so while the great truths which the Oriental authors of the Old Testament books recorded stand out everywhere with wonderful clearness and consistency, there is to our modern Occidental eyes a distressing confusion of materials, and of these we cannot speak with certainty. There are no marks, for instance, on the Book of Jonah or in it to indicate whether the author intended to write history or a parable or both.

But be that as it may, it is absurd to say that an intelligent man cannot afford to take miracles seriously. It is not ignorance that causes men to believe in miracles any more than it is ignorance that causes men to believe in the power of Edison.

Once, let us say, you spent a month with Edison. Day after day you stood by him in his laboratory and watched the wonderful workings of his wonderful mind. Not long afterwards a friend told you of a marvellous invention which Edison had completed and was keeping a secret. It almost took your breath—it was so wonderful; but you said: “I know Edison, and the man who can do what I have seen him do can do anything.” And you believed your friend. So it is with the man who comes to know God. Come into God’s laboratory and put this matter to the test. Shut yourself in with him and live in the secret of his presence. Learn of him in his Word. Talk with him in prayer. Stand by him and watch the wonderful workings of his wonderful mind. Run on errands for him and thus get in sympathy with him and his work. Bring him a poor wreck of a man and watch him make

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him over again. Listen to his voice until you can recognize his faintest whisper. Look for his finger prints in everything he has made. Learn him! Learn him! One day you will say: "Now I know him. I can never fathom his depths but I know him. Why should I stumble at anything his book tells me he has done? He that can do what I have seen him do can do anything!"

### v

People are still asking how any intelligent man in this day and time can believe in the possibility of miracles. I ask how any intelligent man in this day and time can afford to deny the possibility of miracles. We no longer refuse to believe in *human* miracles. Only yesterday we were saying that no intelligent man could afford to assert the impossibility of anything nowadays when impossible things are done every day. If we have such faith in the power of man why should we set a limit upon the power of God?

But, one will say, God not only made this world but he made the laws that govern it, and it is inconceivable that the Almighty should break his own laws.

True: but a miracle is not a violation of law. It is not unnatural; it is simply supernatural.

A New England farmer went West and settled in the midst of a wild forest. In a few years the forest was gone and a city occupied its place. Men came and looked upon the magic city and exclaimed, "What a miracle!" It was not a miracle, for it was

brought about by human power, but it was wonderfully like a miracle. I imagine the birds and squirrels who looked on as the farmer cut down the trees and cleared his ground were shocked at the violence that was done to nature and nature's laws. But the farmer did no violence to any law. He simply projected his will into that forest and made use of the laws of nature in such a way as to bring about the wonderful transformation. Before he came no will had exerted itself there except the will of birds and squirrels, and the place remained a wilderness. The wilderness was transformed into a city by the incoming of a superior will—not contrary to law, but in accordance with law, just as I (to use the old Scotchman's illustration) project my will into my watch and turn the hands backward or forward, or cause it to run fast or slow, not contrary to the laws of watchdom, but in accordance with them.

Now a miracle is God exerting his will in a particular instance in the same way that the New England farmer exerted his will in the wilderness, but with a supernatural power—not a power contrary to nature but a power beyond nature—so that men looking on are forced to recognize it as the work of God.

I have known many people to deny miracles, but I am not sure that I have ever known a man who did not believe in them. Things happen in our own time that are just as supernatural as the most amazing miracle recorded in the Bible. You have a neighbour who twenty years ago went to the dogs. For twenty long years he was a vile running sore on

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the body of his family. One day he came home with a strange light in his eyes. He put his arms around his wife in the old tender way and clasped his children one by one to his bosom. Then he went out and found work. From that day he was a different man—as a new-born babe is different from a drunkard in the gutter. People said, What a miracle! You remember how you tried to explain it on natural grounds—and how you failed. And when you asked the man himself he simply said: “Jesus.” Then the thought came to you: “He is the most godlike man I know. Who can make a man godlike but God himself?” And you believed the miracle which God had wrought upon your neighbour.



## XIV

### CAN AN INTELLIGENT MAN BELIEVE IN PRAYER?

#### I

**W**HAT I have said about the supernatural applies equally to prayer. For prayer is an effort to communicate with God and we can only communicate with God supernaturally—by some law that is beyond nature. Certainly we cannot hope to get his ear by any known law of nature.

But let us go further. In my youth I was often in a sea of troubles about prayer. It seemed to me that there was no end to the perplexing, maddening questions which doubt could ask on this one subject. If God really answers prayer, why does he do thus and so? Why, for example, do we have so many shipwrecks when there are so many praying people abroad? Why is it that the praying man's crop is no bigger than other people's? Why is it that the man who is mightiest in prayer is often the greatest sufferer in the community?

In those days I had not learned to look at life or its problems from any definite or settled point of view. Like a man climbing a mountain, I looked out upon the world now from one point of view and now

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from another, and I passed from point to point so rapidly that my mind was always more or less muddled, and I saw nothing as it really was. This is perhaps the most distressing limitation of youth. The young man in his day of preparation for life is as a climber among the mountains; as he struggles upward he is continually getting new glimpses of life, and these views are so different and take in such small fractions of life's landscape that they are inevitably confusing, and it is impossible for him to escape from the confusion until he has scrambled to the top of the peak where he is to begin life and from which his eyes can sweep the entire horizon. When a young man reaches the top of his own little peak and settles down to live, he finds that he has reached a point where he not only has a comparatively unobstructed view of life, but where he can sit down and give his vision a chance to widen out until he can see things in their true proportions.

When I started in life I began to make things, and I soon found myself looking out upon the world from the point of view of a maker of things. This gave me a wider vision, and I saw things I had never seen before. I understood things I had never understood before. In my school days a house was a house, a bridge was a bridge, a ship was a ship; but now I thought of houses and bridges and ships as the workmanship of men's hands, and I felt an interest in them and in the men who made them that I had never felt before. And I realized the feeling which these men had toward the houses and bridges and

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ships which they had made. I had looked upon trees as trees and rivers as rivers and mountains as mountains and lakes as lakes; but now I thought of them as the workmanship of God's hands, and I thought I knew how God must feel toward them. I said to myself: If I had made this world, I would have a feeling for it which I could not have for yonder star which I did not make. True, I might lose interest in it in the course of time, for time dulls the sense of human interest; but it occurred to me that if God was interested in this world when he made it he must be just as deeply interested in it now, seeing that time can have no effect upon him.

By and by I became a father, and I began to look out upon life from the point of view of a father. This gave me a far wider vision, and I could see many things which I had never seen before, and I could understand many things which had often perplexed me before. In my younger days I had thought of men as men; now I thought of them as sons of the Father, and I think I felt an interest in them and in the Father such as I had never known before. I knew what it was to be a father; I knew the feeling of a father toward his son, and I felt that I knew something of the feeling of God toward those whom he had brought into being. In the course of time there came a second son, and I found that he did not divide my love with my firstborn; I loved them both with all my heart. I knew, moreover, that if I had a hundred sons my heart would embrace them all and I would listen to them all and do my best for every one of them; and so I no

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longer found it hard to believe that God, who was infinite in power and infinite in love, could love and think of and listen to and provide for all of his children even though they might be in number as the sands upon the seashore. Then, too, I knew that I could not take the son whom I had brought into being and carry him off to a distant island and leave him there to himself and never go near him and never allow him to communicate with his father. If I were a brute—rather, if I had lost my manhood and become lower than a brute—I might do it, but as a man I could not do it. And having the feeling of a father, I could not conceive that God would bring me into being and cast me upon this earth and then hermetically seal up the sky on both sides so that he could never hear my cry. I could understand how I could wander away from him until I could not hear his call or understand it if I heard it; but I could not conceive of the Being who had brought me into being sealing up the vault of heaven against me.

### II

Thus I reasoned, and one day when I happened to think of those old questions which I had so often asked myself about prayer, I could not help smiling at myself. For among them all there was not a single question I would have thought of asking if I had been looking at God from the point of view of a father—if I had really realized God as a personal being who had brought me into being. I no longer thought of asking whether God answers prayer any

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more than I thought of asking whether a father answers his children who cry unto him. I no longer thought of asking why God seemed so indifferent to his children in their time of need, for I remembered that as a rule it was when my children thought that I was indifferent to them that my heart was breaking over them. And I am sure that I never again asked any of those foolish commercial questions about prayer, such as, "Why is it that the man who prays does not have bigger crops than other people?" for as a father I knew that there is nothing which digs a wider chasm between father and son than a commercial spirit. The moment a boy ceases to go to his father as a father and begins to think of him only as the pursebearer, communion between father and son is at an end. And communion is prayer. Jesus freely gave five thousand people their supper when they did not so much as ask for it; but when they began to seek him merely because they wanted more suppers, he would not give them a mouthful. As a father I knew that prayer is not a business transaction between employer and employee, but an act of communion between Father and son.

Nor did it occur to me to ask whether my prayers were really answered if I failed to receive just what I asked for. I might have asked that question as a business man, but not as a father. As a father I knew better. A poor woman,—I said to myself—comes to me for bread. I go down town and secure a position for her as a seamstress. The next day she comes to me again. "Did I not do what you

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wanted me to do?" I ask. "But I didn't want work," whines the poor thing; "I wanted bread." What will I do? Will I go to the baker and send her a ready-made loaf? Hardly. Yet have I not answered her prayer?

"Give me this day my daily bread," cries lazy Jake. God has given lazy Jake a little piece of land out in the mountains—given it to him through his father—and he has given him all the health and muscle and mind he needs, and as much sunshine and rain as he has given anybody else, and the little farm is all grown up in weeds and lazy Jake is still wearing holes in his trousers at the knees asking God for his daily bread. Will God send him a loaf from the bakery to convince him that he answers prayer?

"The Lord has been feeding me these thirty years," said old Tom Twaddle at the prayer meeting, "and I never have to worry a minute about my daily bread. I just trust him and praise his name and somehow the bread always comes." But everybody knew that the Lord had been caring for old Tom all along through a faithful wife who for thirty years had kept a boarding house to keep the lazy rascal from starving.

Thus I reasoned and I said to myself: If God in answer to my prayer for bread gives me the ability to make bread, and I refuse to use the ability given me, and continue to cry for bread, I may cry until the crack of doom and there will be no answer. When, in an ugly mood, my child cast away the piece of bread his mother gave him and demanded cake

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did he get it? God is infinite in mercy, but he does not humour our childishness.

And thus it happened with all the questions I had ever asked myself about prayer—they all vanished the moment I came to realize God as the Father of men. If God is not a personal God, we might as well admit that there is no reason why we should pray; but if he is a personal God—the God who brought us into being—it were as foolish not to pray as it would be for a child to refuse to go to his father. For he is bound to answer prayer, just as a wise, loving father is bound to answer prayer—not according to any rules which we in our short-sightedness and selfishness may lay down for him, not according to our whims or cries or to the demands of our own little wildly ticking watches, but according to the dictates of the Father's infinite wisdom and the Father's infinite love.

## XV

### CAN AN INTELLIGENT MAN BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE?

#### I

I WELL remember my first ideas about the Bible. The Bible in my father's home was a big book with gilt clasps and it always lay on a little table in the parlor. I knew it as the *Holy Bible* and I thought of it very much, I suppose, as the Hebrews thought of their Holy of Holies. I was told that it was God's book and that he wrote it and gave it to us. No one explained to me what this meant and I soon found an explanation for myself. I thought I could see God sitting on his throne with the Book in his lap, and I thought he was writing in it with a quill which he had plucked from the wing of the angel who was standing by. The angel was waiting to bring the Book down to us as soon as God had finished it. As I grew older the angel vanished, but I still thought of the Book as the work of God's own hands. I believed that he had dotted every *i* and crossed every *t*, and I knew that if I should forget and scratch out the dot over one of his *i*'s. I should be forever damned. Later I found myself content to believe in the Bible as God's Book without asking myself any embarrassing questions about the dotting of *i*'s or the crossing of *t*'s.



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Nobody had ever told me what Christian scholars thought of the Sacred Book and one day when a distinguished professor from somewhere or other who had come to give us a course of lectures on his specialty stood up bravely before us all and with a cool snap of his finger abolished the Bible, or at least what he called the Bible, I felt that it was the same as abolishing God.

This is not the place for a spiritual autobiography and I need not pursue these recollections further; but I have said this much in order to add that I have since learned to witness the periodical abolition of the Bible by distinguished professors without inward distress. This is because I have discovered what many other plain folk have discovered, that what these brilliant scientific lecturers who are given to abolishing things get frenzied over is not the Bible at all but some of our childish conceptions of the Bible. They are never concerned, I have noticed, about the Word of God; they are only disturbing themselves over the earthen vessels in which the Word of God is contained.

But for this I might do a little raging myself. I might suggest that if the brilliant young biblical abolitionist was a true scientist he would stick to his subject and not venture to express an opinion about a matter that lies wholly beyond his sphere. I might remind the gentle reader of the remarkable contrast between these brilliant journeymen and the true scientist, who places his hand upon his mouth and walks softly all his days. We know that the man of true scientific spirit feels as Isaac Newton felt—

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that he is only a little child picking up a few pebbles here and there on the seashore of knowledge. He realizes that he knows little, and therefore he speaks little. He vaunteth not himself. He is not puffed up. He does not behave himself unseemly. He does not speak with the assurance of those who know that they are the people and that wisdom will die with them. He excels in modesty. He remembers that much of what men thought was true yesterday is no longer true to-day. And he is not certain but that much which seems true to-day will evaporate to-morrow. He believes in science, but he does not believe in the infallibility of scientists. He expects great things of science, but he recognizes its limitations. He does not believe that it is the fountain of all truth. He does not expect science to shed light on God. He rather looks to God to shed light on science.

But all this would hardly be worth while. What should be said, however,—and this can be said without raging—is that it is difficult to understand how it is possible for any man of true scientific spirit to stand up before an audience and seriously affirm that our fathers believed that the Bible was literally written by the finger of God, or that every word in the Bible as it has come down to us was spoken by God to a divinely controlled amanuensis.

### II

Of course there were good people in the days of the fathers who did believe these things. There are people who believe a lot of absurdities to-day; but

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that does not prove that the scholars of to-day believe them. Why do we insist upon measuring the present by the brilliant achievements of its scholars, and the past by the abysmal ignorance of its masses? Would we think it fair to measure the past by its Platos and the present by its Fifth Avenue dudes? If you will dig among the old books in the garrets of our old Southern homes you will find that our great-grandfathers read *Locke on the Human Understanding* and the ancient philosophers and that they rested their minds with *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy*. And in these same homes you will find their great-grandsons to-day reading the ten-cent magazines. Does that prove that the past was all intellect and the present all froth?

As a matter of fact, the scholarly view of the Bible in old times did not differ at any really vital point from the view of the moderately conservative scholarship of to-day. In those days the world was not as tolerant as it is now and scholars did not usually speak out as plainly as they do now; but their view, so far as it has come down to us, was in all vital particulars essentially the same as our own.

The old-time scholars were by no means as ignorant as we imagine. Many things which have been paraded in recent years as late discoveries were known generations ago. But the scholars of those days rested their faith upon deeper foundations than the earthen vessels in which the Word of God was found, and they were not disturbed. They assured themselves that whatever might be said of the

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material of which the Bible was composed the evident purpose of the Bible was to reveal God, and they knew that if men would read it through they would have before them the only full, worthy, satisfying revelation of God that the human race possessed. Let the unfriendly critic prove what he might about these materials; the fact remained that the Bible revealed God as nothing else did and revealed him in such a way that it was impossible to resist the conclusion that he himself inspired it.

And this is practically the position of the moderately conservative scholars of our own day. Modern conservative scholarship holds that nothing that has been established or even made probable by modern investigation has in any decree discredited the Bible as the Word of God. It does not dogmatize as to God's methods of revelation, but it does declare with all the emphasis in its power that God in his own way did actually give to men unmistakable glimpses of his mind and heart—sufficient glimpses to enable them to find their way into right relations with him,—and not only moved them to record what they had learned, but so guided them that the records accurately reveal the truths which were revealed to them. If one will go carefully over all that the critics of the reverent, constructive type have done one will find that they have left the Bible as the Word of God just where it was before. As the inspired Word of God it stands exactly where it was before. They have indeed taught us some things we never knew before, and they have reminded us of some things which were known long ago, but

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which many of us had lost sight of. For one thing they have reminded us that God's will was revealed to us through human channels or by human means, and that as everything that is human is imperfect the human that is in the Book could not be perfect. They have reminded us that while God inspired men to record what they had learned of him he did not provide them with scientific knowledge or, so far as the evidence goes, knowledge of any sort that was not essential to the truth which he had revealed to them. There was no reason why he should provide them with a knowledge of history and science such as men could not obtain through their own efforts for thousands of years to come. There was no reason why he should explain to them that it was scientifically incorrect to say that the sun rose and set.

### III

Evidently God was not interested in furnishing mankind with a book that would meet the demands of a science that was yet to be born. He inspired men simply to write his Word: not his *words*, not his Hebrew or Greek or English vocabulary, not his grammar or rhetoric or arithmetic or astronomy, but his Word—his utterance—the utterance of himself to mankind. And they did what they were inspired to do, each according to his own individual gifts and equipment. But when you have gone over all the results of conservative criticism you will find that the Bible *as the Word of God* stands, as I have said, exactly where it stood before. Nothing that has

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been discovered has changed its standing as God's utterance of himself to men.

And nothing can alter this standing, for the simple reason that it has stood the final test. The final proof of the pudding is not in the scientific conclusions that may be reached as to its materials, but in the eating. If your pudding *proves* to be nutritious food it *is* nutritious food, the opinions of all the cooks in the world to the contrary notwithstanding. So the final proof that the Bible is of God is in what it does for those who feed upon it.

My faith in the Word of God does not depend upon my ability to satisfy my intelligence as to the form in which it has been given to us. That is a question designed to sidetrack the believer from the main issue. I don't care whether the form of the Word of God conforms to my modern scientific notions or not. This is not worth a rap in comparison with the supreme test to which the Word itself has been subjected. I believe that the Bible is the Word of God because that Word has stood the two supreme tests—the test of life and the test of character. It does for life and character what humanity needs, and that cannot be said of any other book. The trouble about the sacred books of other ancient religions is that they fail at these two final tests. You may read these books until you have been thoroughly saturated with them and not receive a single impulse Godward or a single ray of satisfying light about God or a single spark of life or force to transform or add to your own life; but the very moment that the truths of this Word begin

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to filter through our minds down into our hearts we receive an impulse toward God and the light of God begins to shine in our faces. A single copy of the Gospels dropped in the wilderness of human life has caused that wilderness to blossom as the rose.

I know that the Bible is inspired because it inspires.

I know that it is inspired by God because it reveals God while the other writings of antiquity leave us in the dark about God; because it gave men an impulse toward God at a time when the ideals of mankind were all opposed to God; because it still gives this Godward impulse to men whose ideals are opposed to him.

## XVI

### WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR THE MODERN MAN TO BELIEVE IN GOD?

#### I

**I** SAID something to a young man about immortality. He sighed and looked away. "Yes," he replied sadly, "if we only knew it was true."

"If we only knew it was true!" I have heard it so often of late that my heart grows sick at the thought of it. Go where you will, offer your religion of hope to the first sad-faced man you meet, and if he is well-dressed and intelligent-looking the chances are five to one that he will say, "Yes, if we only knew it was true." And if, like that young man, he has recently lost his mother, he will sigh and look away before he says it.

It is heartbreaking. It makes one think of the dark days of Rome when men cast off religion as a worn-out garment and then plunged headlong into a whirlpool of pleasure in a desperate effort to forget the dead hope that lay like a millstone on their hearts. Is the world losing its consciousness of God? Is it losing its spiritual vision? Is its inner ear becoming atrophied from disuse? Are we losing the power to believe? Is our materialistic civiliza-



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tion gradually forcing us down from the heights of the sons of God to the low valleys where the cattle graze and where men can only live as cattle and see the things that cattle see? Will the steadily increasing weight of big business, of hard won social prizes, of vaulting ambitions, of stocks and bonds and houses and lands and automobiles, eventually drag us all down out of sight of God? What is the matter with the world? Why is it that the modern, intelligent, prosperous man of good social position finds it so hard to believe in the realities of the Unseen?

### II

Our fathers believed in heroism. They believed in sacrifice. They believed in suffering. They believed that the man who runs from pain is unfit for life either here or hereafter. They believed in the rod of affliction that drives men back to God. They believed in the afflictions that come in troops, overwhelming a man, breaking his grip on the world, stripping him of all that he has gathered around himself and casting him upon the ground stark and empty-handed, with nothing left but the power to whisper to God. It was such testing that, under the grace of God, gave us our glorious army of prophets, apostles and martyrs, once our inspiration, but now, alas! our horror.

Suppose you should say all this to that young chap across the street whose whole life up to this moment has been the last word in coddling. Suppose you should tell him that a hundred years ago before the days of chloroform, a man would lie down

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on the table to have a leg cut off and dare the surgeon to make him groan. That young chap howls at the prick of a pin. Suppose you should tell him that our most aristocratic forefathers toasted their toes before a handful of coals in a brazier in the middle of the room and defied the icy winds that froze their backs. That young chap demands that the furnace shall be run at seventy and woe to the furnace boy if the thermometer should fall to sixty-nine. His cold water must be just so, and his hot water must be just so, and his coffee and rolls just so, or life is not worth while any more. His easy chair must fit his spine to a hairsbreadth or this world is a howling wilderness. Suppose you should tell him that our fathers believed that God wanted men and that they knew that coddling made nothing but babies—white-fingered, gripless, gritless chaps with flabby muscles, peripatetic seekers after easy jobs—and that they gloried in hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. What would all this sound like to him? Would he believe it? No doubt he would take your word for it—it would be less trouble than to undertake to disprove it—but would he believe it? Would he *realize* it?

A little fellow who has been wrecked by a long illness falls victim to a strange nervous affection. To his ears all sounds are noises and all noises give him the "horrors." For twenty years he is protected from sound as carefully as a mother would protect her baby from a chilling wind. For twenty years he lives like a man sitting alone in a boat in the midst of a becalmed sea. And then one day his

trouble suddenly disappears. A few days later he walks down the village street. In the course of his walk he passes a boy sitting on the curb beating a tin pan, a smithy where the blacksmith is beating time on his anvil and a home where a young lady is playing a difficult selection from an opera. Now imagine yourself dropping in to see him on his return. You are full of enthusiasm over your last evening at the grand opera and you would like to tell him about it. Suppose you should try. Would he know what you were talking about? Doubtless before you went far his puzzled look would remind you of his long affliction and you would have compassion upon him and go back to the beginning and try to make him understand what the world of music was like. Do you think you would succeed? Very probably he would remind you that he knows something about music himself. He has just returned from a long walk and he has heard a boy beating a tin pan and a blacksmith beating time on his anvil and a young lady playing on the piano. And he would have you understand that in his opinion there was nothing in it. True, there was something stimulating in the blacksmith's rhythm, but that was all; as for the tin pan and the piano one seemed to make as much noise as the other and he could see nothing in either.

Why is it so hard for a coddled youth to believe that there is such a thing as a world of heroism and sacrifice? There is but one answer: because he has always lived in a world that is entirely different from the world of heroism and sacrifice. Why is it so

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hard for a man who has been shielded from sound all his life to believe that there is such a thing as a world of music? The answer is the same: because he has always lived in a world that is entirely different from the world of music. Now we are ready for our first question: Why is it so hard for the modern man to believe in God? In other words, why is it so hard for the average American of the prosperous class to believe that there is such a thing as a world of spirit?

We usually give the same answer: we say that it is because he is living in a world that is so entirely different from the world of spirit. That is true as far as it goes but it doesn't go far enough. The average American of the prosperous class finds it hard to realize the world of spirit not only because he is living in a world so entirely different from it, but because he is living in an atmosphere so dense that he doesn't get a glimpse of it. Unless something happens—a terrific explosion, a sudden catastrophe of some sort—to clear up the atmosphere, he never catches a glimpse of it.

### III

Of course we have always had trouble with the atmosphere. It is human to stir up the dust and there has always been enough dust in the atmosphere to obscure our vision of the land of the spirit. But sometimes we raise more dust than usual. In the eighteenth century the world went pleasure mad and the air became so dense with materialism that the land of the spirit passed almost entirely beyond

human vision, and at one time it looked as if even the thought of God would be blotted out of the world. And for the last two generations we have been at it again. Not indeed in the same way nor to the same degree; nevertheless the atmosphere is thicker to-day than it has been at any time since it was cleared by the shock of the eighteenth century world troubles and the Wesleyan revival. I don't mean to say that the world is getting worse. I don't mean to say that religion is dying out. What I mean is that within the last forty years we have raised so much dust—we have made the air so dense with materialism—that it is harder for the average American of the prosperous class—the man who lives where the atmosphere is thickest—to catch a glimpse of the land of the spirit—to become conscious of God—than it has been at any previous time in the last hundred and fifty years.

Put in a nutshell, this generation finds it hard to believe in God because for forty years or more our emphasis upon physical science has been creating an atmosphere through which it is almost impossible to see God. It takes a material atmosphere to see a dollar, an automobile, a warship, a forty-two centimetre gun. It takes a spiritual atmosphere to see God. Our emphasis upon physical science has surrounded us with an atmosphere peculiarly fitted to the eyes that are looking for dollars, automobiles, warships and forty-two centimetre guns: to the eyes that are looking for God and the things of God it is just a great, dark, all-pervading cloud of dust.

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The inevitable has happened. Sixty years ago Amiel uttered his solemn warnings against over-much science. Science was a blessing, but if the world didn't look sharp, too much science would prove its ruin. Too much science would dry up the breast of humanity, destroy the spiritual vision and make the race an aggregation of machines. We have seen the beginnings of the fulfilment of Amiel's prophecy. We have seen science tear history to pieces, throw away its heart and its inspiration and make it over into a dry sum in human arithmetic. We have seen it tear our poetry to pieces and leave nothing but a carefully reconstructed skeleton. We have seen it tear a nation to pieces and transform it into a steam roller. We have seen it tear homes to pieces and transform them into headquarters for the conduct of domestic business on the limited co-partnership plan. We have seen it tear the fundamental laws of God affecting human relationships to pieces and transform them into arbitrary conventions so constructed that they can be instantaneously converted into any other desired convention at the touch of a button. We have seen it lay a young man on an operating table, take all the faith and the priceless hopes of his fathers out of his heart, cut off all the channels leading to high spiritual goals, disconnect him from all the realities of the Unseen, close up his inner eye, his inner ear—all his spiritual senses—in a word, transform him from a spiritual being inhabiting a physical body fitted for the high altitudes of the world of spirit to an animal with a thinking-machine attachment and with a vision

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limited to the horizon that bounds the low levels where cattle graze—a horizon dotted with dollars, automobiles, warships and forty-two centimetre guns, but without a sunset, a hint of angels' wings, a vision of the fronded palms of the isles of the blest, a trace of the blue smoke circling up from the chimney of childhood's home or an elusive glimpse of a sainted mother's eyes.

### IV.

Our forefathers thought of God by day and dreamed of him by night. He was the one Power: they knew no other and he was their only hope. They cast in all their fortunes with him. They felt that all their future was bound up in him. They thought of him until the atmosphere became so clear that they could almost see him with their physical eyes. For more than a generation we have been thinking of science by day and dreaming of it by night. To the average up-to-date prosperous American, science occupies exactly the same place that his father gave to God. All his hopes are set upon it. All his fortunes are bound up with it. Science will give him life. Science will make him strong. Science will bring rain and sunshine. Science will make him rich. Science will bring down the mountains and level up the valleys and make great national highways for automobiles. Science will help him in his hours of—no, there will be no hours of darkness: science will abolish darkness. Science will satisfy the longings of his—well, it will either satisfy the longings of his soul or prove that he has no soul—

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which will answer quite as well. Science is our rising sun. Science will dispel the poisonous vapours of the night, set the birds to singing in the trees, warm the air with sunshine and set the dewdrops to dancing like fairies upon the grass. What Christianity couldn't do science will do. With science we shall redeem the world.

And through all these years we have been striving to do the will of this new god—working day and night up to our eyes in the only stuff that our new god knows anything about—earth: common earth;—and raising the dust! And to-day there is so much dust everywhere that we can hardly breathe for it. Our lungs are lined with it and our hearts and minds are choked with it and the lilies in our gardens are black with it and the atmosphere is so thick that we almost despair of seeing the sun.

Again, our forefathers fell in line with God's plans to keep the atmosphere clear and tried to help him keep it clear. They believed that God had wedged in the Sabbaths between the weeks to give their souls a breathing chance. They felt that but for his Sabbaths they would have gone on digging in the earth from one year's end to another and never stopped to catch a glimpse of him or give him a moment's thought. They thanked God for the day that compelled them to stop and think and they stopped—stopped and uncovered their heads and thought. And as they thought the dust of the week settled and through the clearing air they saw his face. Also they believed that the quiet evening hour was an invitation from God to come apart and sit



awhile with him. And every day they spent a little while sitting alone with God. They didn't feel that it was "hell to be alone." They were glad to sit still and watch the gathering shades of night and think until he became real to them again—so real that they were almost sure they felt his breath of love upon their cheeks. Moreover, when they went to church they went for the uplift of their spirits, and so they didn't mind spending two or three hours to get them uplifted any more than a man minds spending nowadays two or three hours at the theatre to get his mind and nerves soothed and rested. Also, when they read the Bible they read it for their soul's sake. They read it as the Word of God for their soul's sake: it never occurred to them to study it as literature for culture's sake. They read it to satisfy their hunger, not to indulge their critical faculty. And their daily reading of the Word of God refreshed the image of God in their minds. Also "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." They talked religion as they talked politics and crops and all the other realities of life. They didn't give themselves a chance to forget God.

To-day instead of falling in with God's plans to keep the atmosphere clear we have fallen in line with the plans of science—plans which are every day making the atmosphere denser. We are like the proud Pittsburger who dearly loves his city's smoke and glories in its soot. We have redeemed the Sabbath and brought it back into the week and we are as proud of our achievement as if we had redeemed

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a million acres of waste land. We no longer waste the day in unprofitable meditation about things one knows nothing about: we bring our automobiles and golf sticks and Pullmans into it and make the most of it. From morning till night we keep our physical eyes and ears busy just as we have done through all the other days, and let our spiritual senses rest just as we have done through all the other days. We don't see why our spiritual senses, if we have any, should be disturbed. Therefore we have no more quiet hours, no more sitting alone with our conscience, no more Bible reading. And of course we don't bother about church and of course one doesn't mention religion in polite society any more. Religion is taboo.

### V

And thus we have gone on devoting seven days in the week and every waking hour of each day to matter—gross, common matter,—cultivating our material senses until they have grown so keen that we can hear the clink of a silver dollar before it is coined, and neglecting our spiritual senses until we can hardly see the love that's in a mother's eyes—thus we have gone on until to-day there are in America hundreds of thousands of intelligent men and women who are as completely cut off from all spiritual vision as the Romans were in the days of the decline of the empire. And they talk just as hopelessly. "Yes, if we only knew it was true." "Yes, but you know these things are no longer accepted." "Yes, but science, you know——"

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“Yes, but——” “Yes, but——” They not only have no consciousness of God as the Supreme Reality of the Unseen, but the whole fabric of the faith of the fathers has vanished from their hearts. And that is not all: they have never even suspected what has happened. They imagine that the whole matter has been finally settled by science and never dream, what any child looking in their faces can see, that they are like men standing in the midst of a dense fog declaring with a pitiful gesture of authority that the sun has ceased to exist.

This is what we need to think of when our hearts are asking so anxiously why the world is talking so hopelessly about God. We cannot deny that there is such talk. In what we call the higher circles one hears it almost everywhere. Everywhere up-to-date prosperous people are saying that we no longer know about God. We don't know about immortality. We don't know that we have a soul. And we can hardly pick up an “up-to-the-minute” magazine or book that we don't come upon the echo of the same hopeless voices. We don't know about God! We don't know about immortality! We don't know that we have a soul! And sometimes our hearts grow sick with a vague foreboding and we wonder if the whole world of spirit is about to collapse.

But let us not throw up our hands. Let us use them to hold our knees still while we ask: Whence do these voices come? Do they come from the heights where the air is clear enough to see a sunset, a hint of

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angels' wings, a vision of the fronded palms of the isles of the blest, a trace of the blue smoke curling up from the chimney of childhood's home or an evanescent glimpse of a sainted mother's eyes?

## XVII

### IS THERE NO WAY TO SETTLE OUR DOUBTS?

#### I

**I**T makes me sick at heart to think of going on in this way forever. Once I could believe anything; now I doubt everything. And what is worse, nearly everybody I meet seems to be in the same plight. Is the world losing its power to believe? Has it lost its way to a settled mind?"

Thus spoke a man who——

But this is the only part of the story that has to do with what I am going to say and we might as well stop here. The rest is interesting, but it might prove diverting. What I want to call attention to is not the story, but the fact that this pitiful confession, so far from being unique, is one of a million, all of which are exactly alike. In the last dozen years a million people—certainly not less—must have said the very same thing.

No: I would not say that the world is losing its power to believe, though there are times when one is tempted to remark that all signs seem to point that way; but it cannot be denied that the world is taking very little pains to keep from losing it. It seems to me there has never been a time—certainly not since

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that taste of perdition we had just previous to the Wesleyan revival—when mankind has been so distressingly careless about what becomes of the things that are supposed to keep the faith of men alive. The world wants to believe, but it is content with such faith as may come up voluntarily; at least it is not disposed to put itself to the trouble of making a crop.

It is very easy and on the whole quite satisfying to say that one of the most pressing needs of the Christian world of our day is a settled mind. And it is just as easy and quite as satisfying, after one has said it and added thereto the various and sundry platitudes which usually accompany such deliverances, to settle back in one's easy chair and dismiss the subject by the way it came. But what we need to do in a time of the world's need is not something easy but something hard. We need to stop talking about the world's need of a settled mind long enough to lead the way ourselves. We need to address ourselves earnestly to the selfish task of getting our own minds settled.

### II

Religious doubt is sometimes nothing more than a physical or mental phenomenon. It may have nothing whatever to do at first with one's moral or religious condition. One of the most pious women I have ever known was all her life tormented by doubts. In her case it was a mental disease. But doubts may come with certain changes of mind that are perfectly natural and healthy. If I am told that Jones has become skeptical, I do not denounce him as a fool,

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or pity him as a miserable sinner; I simply ask how old he is.

In youth doubt is a symptom of certain changes going on in the mind just as the gosling voice or the down on the upper lip are symptoms of changes going on in the body. For the mind passes through critical periods very much like the body. The first critical period in which doubt is a noticeable symptom occurs ordinarily about the sixteenth year, sometimes earlier. Up to that time your boy has accepted what was told him with child-like confidence. Now everything appears hazy and confused, and it becomes as natural to distrust or doubt as it was formerly to believe. If at this period the youth goes off to school and falls among thieves—agnostics who would steal our faith for which they have no use—and is exposed to the germs of doubt, he is exceedingly liable to catch it. When the mind is passing through this critical stage, it is as easy for a youth to catch doubt as it is for a child to catch the measles. The difference is, when the child is told it is measles he believes it and submits to treatment, while the youth who is told that his attack of doubt is only a passing contagion, looks at you as if you were a mild lunatic. A young student goes to Europe and comes back a skeptic. He thinks he has got something; the trouble is something has got him. It is a clear case of mental measles. If you who are nearest to him will take him in hand wisely and nurse him carefully, if you will keep him in a warm room and give him plenty of flaxseed tea, as it were—that is to say, if you will keep his heart warm

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with your love and tender care—the attack will in all probability run its course in due time, and he may be none the worse for it. But the trouble is, we do not treat him kindly. We call him a fool. We tell him he has dropsy in his head, and all that; and by such criminal malpractice we have caused many a case to become chronic. There may be trouble with his head, but he is not to blame for that, and we need not remind him of it. We should rather let him feel that we respect him, and that we respect his thoughts. And it would be better to renounce once for all the privilege of lecturing him, to stop trying our arguments upon him, and simply seek to turn his mind by our example to the experimental evidences of Christianity. We can show him what Christ does for our own lives—not by arguing the matter out, but by living it out in his presence. We ought so to walk before him that he will one day wake up and exclaim: “I do not see any sense in it; it is all a mystery; but there is mother—I see what it has done for her; there is father, I see what it has done for him.”

A great many attacks of doubt are caused by attempting to think through a great mystery of religion without due preparation or without taking proper precautions. When you were a boy you did not like to feel that there was anything another boy could do that you could not do. That feeling led you sometimes into water that was over your head because another boy had gone before you; and it caused you to get lost in a swamp because some other boy had successfully explored it. And since you became a



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man you have had much of the same feeling in regard to your brain. You do not like to admit that what another has done with his brain you may not safely do with yours. Yet it is just as silly for a man to go beyond his depth in his thinking without due preparation or precaution as it is for a boy to go beyond his depth in swimming without due preparation or precaution. Here is a young man who has undertaken to think through some great doctrine of our faith—the doctrine of the resurrection, or the trinity, or the atonement. In a little while he is lost. In his confusion of mind he can believe nothing, he can accept nothing. What is the trouble?

Here is a boy who says: "I am going to explore that swamp. Others have been through it, and I am going to see for myself." And he plunges into the thicket. He has made no preparation, he does not know what to expect. In a moment he is lost. That would not be a serious matter to a veteran swamp explorer, for the reason that a man in a swamp is lost all the while. But this boy has not counted on the certainty of getting lost, or the strange appearance of things, and by and by, when he comes to a place where the sunlight is shut out and everything is strange about him, his brain becomes confused and his heart sinks within him. He begins to grope wildly about. He is terrified lest he should never get out. And on he flounders. By and by he may flounder out, or he may not. A veteran explorer decides to go through the same swamp. He makes every preparation. And then he plunges in. The sun is soon out of sight, but that does not disturb

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him. Everything appears strange, but he is prepared for it, and he is not confused. He simply consults his compass and keeps on his way. By and by he comes out safe and sound, and with the knowledge for which he went. So it is in our mental excursions.

A great deal of modern doubt is nothing more than a sort of—let us call it mould on the brain caused by staying too long indoors; that is, by living too long apart from, out of touch with one's fellow men. We need to get out into the sunshine where we can listen to the voices of life—where we can hear the birds sing and little children laugh; where the groans of the oppressed mingle with the shouts of the victors; where women are one moment prattling with their babies and the next burying their faces in the cradle pillow to stifle the cry of a broken heart. We need to come in touch with life; not with theories; not with the forms or conventions or machinery of life, but with life—with the real life-blood of men and women flowing hot from their throbbing hearts. We don't realize what a wonderful clarifier life is. Contact with humanity—I don't mean association with people who are trying to exist and do their own thinking apart from life, but actual contact with real, live, struggling folks—will rid one of more morbidness, more doubt, more sophistry, more illusions, more errors and foolishness of every sort than anything else in the wide world that I know of except direct contact with God, and sympathetic contact with real folks is one of the best ways in the world to come in contact with him.

III

"But what shall I do when I find everything slipping from beneath my feet?"

Bless you, keep right on. Walk straight on all the same and hold to your course. Hold on to your collapsed ideals, whether there are holes in them or not. Read your Bible, whatever you may think the critics have done to it. Keep on praying just as you did when you believed that you could reach out and touch God with your hand. In other words, *sit steady in your boat and wait till the squall is over*. You are passing through the storm and stress period that comes to every thinking man sooner or later. Sit steady in your boat. Hold on to what you have. Throw nothing overboard until the storm is over. I have seen many a man in that plight, and I never knew one of them who didn't make port all right who kept steady in his boat.

I know what you are saying. You are saying that you have no boat; that you are all up in the air. But that is only a storm illusion. Let me change my figure. Once I spent a holiday climbing a mountain I had never attempted to climb before. Every time I came to a little opening through the trees I stopped and tried to get a view. I wanted to see what the country looked like. But every view I got was different and I soon became confused; so many different views got me in a muddle. At last I came out into the open and got a grand view of the country from the south side of the mountain. But it was not until I got to the top where my eyes could

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sweep the entire horizon that I could see things as they were. Now this is a picture of life. We spend our lives mountain-climbing. The first time I got a peep at a section of God's great universe I thought I saw it all and I formed my opinions accordingly. A little later I got another view and I thought my first view was wrong and that this one was right and I revised my opinions accordingly. By and by I got so many views mixed in my mind that I became utterly confused. But I waited. At last I left college and went out into life and the openings through the trees became bigger and bigger, and by and by I came out into an open place and I found that the universe was a very different thing from what I had guessed it to be when I was glimpsing little sections of it far down the mountainside. And so I say: hold on to what you've got. You are thinking hard and that means you are climbing the mountain rapidly and your rapid climbing is all the more confusing. Hold on to what you've got and one day when you come out into the open you will find that the faith of your fathers, crude as it may seem to you, is not a theoretical view like that which men form who spend their narrow existence in the laboratories far away from life, but a view that is confirmed by all the experience of the wise in all ages who have measured the heights of life and plumbed its depths and touched it at every point.

But one word more. You have—let us say—a very dear friend living in a distant town whom you have not seen for years. In the days when you

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walked together you trusted him perfectly. Lately you had some correspondence about a matter of business, which resulted in a misunderstanding, and you began to doubt the friend whom you had once trusted as you had trusted your own heart. You wrote him sharply, and he replied, trying to explain; but you could not understand. You could not understand because you had begun to doubt him. After a while he wrote: "I can't explain the matter on paper; I am coming to see you face to face." And the other day he came in. He walked into your office and you looked into his face. He held out his hand and began to say, "I came to——" "Oh! never mind," you answered, "that is all right. I don't understand it, but I can trust you." The glimpse of his face had brought you back to where you stood in the days of your perfect confidence.

So, let us say, yonder is God. You have been thinking of other things of late, and the divine face has gradually receded until you have almost forgotten. And something has happened of late—some great trial, perhaps—that has created a misunderstanding; you don't know about God now. But come to him. Come into the secret place of the Most High, and look again into his face.

You will not need to do more.

## XVIII

### HOW CAN I BECOME A VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN?

#### I

**W**E seldom raise a troublesome question about religion that we don't raise an accusing ghost along with it. Usually it is the same ghost and a very fearsome apparition it is. It is not Banquo's ghost, though it acts very much like it. Let the question be what it may, the discussion is hardly launched before we are thrown into a panic by a sudden instinctive feeling that the thing is passing before us. It does not speak, but it gives us one look and that is enough.

"Fools!" says that one look; "you Christians would have no troublesome questions but for your own miserable failure."

"Failure!"

Blink it as we may, we Christians cannot get that word out of our vision. Go where we will, it is always before our eyes. We may not hear it often, but we are always seeing it. The great majority of professing Christians that one meets have failure written all over them. There is no use in denying it. They don't deny it themselves. Ask the first ten

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church members you meet and seven or eight out of the ten will tell you candidly that as Christians they are failures—miserable failures. They may not confess to failure in anything else, but they don't mind saying they have made a mess of their religion.

And yet if you will call all the people you know together—church members and non-church members, good people, bad people, indifferent people—and ask them what they would like to be, nine-tenths of them will say:

“I'd rather be a true Christian—not a make-believe, but a really victorious Christian—than anything else in the world.”

That is what they will say and having said it they will turn away with a hopeless sigh and straightway forget it.

What is the matter with us? Why is the average man, who is a jubilant optimist when he is planning for victory in a business or professional life, such a pessimist when he comes to plan for victory in the Christian life that he hardly has the courage to plan at all? What is in the way of any man who really wants to be a victorious Christian to keep him from becoming the kind of Christian he wants to be?

I have already mentioned two obstacles—the unsettled mind and the lack of God-consciousness. So long as a man's mind is distracted with doubts and so long as he has no consciousness of God as a real, living, present Being, he is not going to win any sort of a victory in the Christian life. But this is not all.

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You are already—let us say—what you would call a sort of a Christian. You have already gone to God in the usual way. You have taken your burden of sin and your heartache to him and you have cast yourself at his feet and begged him for the sake of his Son to forgive and cleanse you and take you into his keeping. In a general way you have put yourself into his hands. That is, you have spoken the word of surrender. But you have found that putting yourself in the hands of Christ in a general way does not mean anything in particular. It is like the hospitality of the excessively polite Spaniard who flings the door wide with a magnificent flourish and vows that his house and all that he has are yours. It doesn't mean anything in particular. Now, here is a good place to begin. Begin to-day by meaning something in particular. In other words, come to a clear understanding with yourself as to just what you are actually putting into Christ's hands. It is rather a humiliating test, but it is a necessary test. You are not going forward until you know where you are and this test will enable you to find out. And you will find out very quickly.

You have been thinking very seriously of late and you have reached the conclusion that you can never live a life that is really worth while under your present master, Self. You have come to see that selfish ambition can only lead downward while ambition for God and your fellow men always leads upward. The only happy people you know are those who have escaped the thralldom of Self. You know that all human experience testifies to the truth that



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he who is determined to save his life loses it and that he who is willing to lose his life finds the life that is worth while. You know that whatever we gain in this life we gain by giving, that we win hearts only by giving our own hearts, that we get life and life more abundantly only as we give our life, that our burdens are lightened only by taking upon our necks the yoke of one we love, that the fullest, richest, happiest lives are the lives of men and women who refuse to take thought of self and who spend the last ounce of their strength for others.

And you want to be like them. You want to live the full, abundant, victorious life that Christ has made possible for you. You are not satisfied to be half alive. You want to be alive through and through. In a word you want to be a man, such a man as God designed you to be, equipped for real life—equipped to overcome, to win out in the great tests of life, to win souls, to do a full day's work for God and fellow man.

### II

If this is your aim, if you really want to live a victorious life, it is clear that you must do something more than make a speech of surrender to Christ. You must do something more than give up some pet sin. You must cast yourself at his feet and actually surrender to him all there is of you and all that you have. And you must make your surrender unconditional and final.

If you want Christ to make a whole Christian out

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of you you must place at his disposal all there is of you.

Do I mean that you must drop everything to-day, close up your business, throw away all your plans and hopes, crucify your ambition, bid farewell to your loved ones and enter upon what the world calls a sacred vocation? No: not necessarily. Surrender to Christ does not mean casting away things; it means casting things at his feet. It does not mean the destruction of property; it means a change of ownership. Here is this tyrant Self who, you say, is still ruling as a usurper upon God's throne in your heart. Surrender to Christ means taking everything—your soul, mind, body, property—out of the hands of this tyrant and turning it all over to Christ to be his forever. That is all. Up to this moment, let us say, you have been doing business for Self, you have been planning for Self, you have been ambitious for Self; from now on what you have given or done for Self you must give or do for Christ. Of course, if there is anything in your business that Christ cannot make use of you will have to cast it aside. If you have any plans that he cannot make use of you will have to drop them. But you are not to cast aside anything that is of value to him. Whatever you do you must not cast aside ambition. You may have to cast away a particular ambition but you must not cast away ambition. If you do that you will be of no more use to Christ than you will be to anybody else. What Christ wants you to do is to turn your ambition from a selfish object to an unselfish object—to stop being ambitious

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for yourself and to become ambitious for him—for his cause and for your fellow men whom he died to save.

We have got this idea of self-crucifixion wrong. Christ does not ask us to crucify ourselves; he cannot use dead men; he asks us to put ourselves into his hands. If you have anything that can be used for his cause, anything that can be used to help those for whom he died, he would not have you throw it away; he simply wants you to take it out of the service of Self and transfer it to the service of others. Self-crucifixion does not mean annihilation; it does not mean the destruction of personality or individuality; it simply means the crucifixion of one's selfish nature so that one can be transferred from the service of Self to the service of Christ and of those for whom Christ died.

Perhaps it is because you stumbled at the thought of annihilation that you have never reached the point of absolute surrender. You imagined that what Christ wanted you to do was to annihilate yourself and naturally you shrank from it. Every human being shrinks from annihilation. So long as there is anything of the Eternal God in us, so long as the hope of immortality remains in us, we cannot but shrink from it. But Christ came to save us, not to destroy us, and if we will fall in with his plan of service, instead of casting away what we have we shall hand it over to him that he may purify and strengthen it and fit it for his service. We shall cast our poor manhood at his feet and we shall enter his service, not with less manhood but more. We shall

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cast our ambition at his feet and we shall enter his service, not with less ambition but more; we shall go to our work on fire with ambition for Christ and his cause and for our fellow men. We need not be afraid of being annihilated. Jesus gave himself for us down to the last drop of his blood. Was he annihilated? Did he lose one whit of his manhood? Did he lose a particle of his ambition—this Man who aspired to nothing less than the conquest of every human heart? Did Paul annihilate himself when he surrendered to his Lord? No doubt his friends said that he had thrown his life away, but did he have less life afterwards than before? Did he show less zeal, less brain power, less heart power, less influence, less personality? Have not the most powerful personalities of all ages been men who have given themselves down to the last drop of their blood for God and their fellow men?

### III

Still you hesitate. Time and again you have come to the point of casting Self away and then shrunk back with horror as if you were about to cast yourself from a precipice into midnight darkness. "How is it possible," you have asked, "for a man whose whole being is throbbing with ambition to deliberately send a sword through his own soul?"

Somewhere I have told the story of an ambitious young fellow who was passing through the same awful struggle. One evening he unbosomed himself to an old friend as they walked together in the twilight. He had a consuming thirst for glory and he

felt that his case was almost hopeless; but he was brave and he was still struggling. The old man stopped and for a moment stood gazing at the moon as if lost in tender memories, and when he spoke his voice was soft and low.

"When I was of your age," he said, "I fell in love with a beautiful girl. She was as beautiful in spirit as she was in person. When I first met her I was a selfish fellow, full of materialistic notions and without a single high ideal. By and by I found that I was growing less selfish and my thoughts and feelings were becoming more and more like her own. All my old materialistic notions fell away from me, and high ideals began to come into view. Before a year had passed I had hitched my wagon to a star. Would you know what brought about this wonderful change? Was it simply association with a noble Christian girl? No, not altogether. I might have associated with her and yet have steeled my heart against her influence. It was *surrender*, sir—that's the word. It was not a matter of resolving certain intellectual doubts about her or about her ideals or principles. It was simply a matter of surrender. I went down on my knees to her, sir, and let her have her way with me. That was all. I began to live her life because I opened my heart to her and let her have her way with me. Now, suppose this beautiful girl had had superhuman power. Would I not have become more wonderfully like her? and would I not have lived her life more completely?"

"Do you mean," said the young fellow, and his voice trembled as he spoke, "that if I will go down

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on my knees to Christ as you did to that beautiful girl and surrender myself to him just as completely and let him have his way with me and associate with him with an open heart day by day—do you mean that this will solve my problem?”

“Try it,” whispered the old man, laying his hand gently upon his shoulder.

He did try it, but not until his life had been swept by a storm that left him nothing else to try. One day as he lay flat upon his back as helpless as a newborn babe, stripped of everything that human ambition could feed upon, the vast stretches before his eyes swept of almost every obstruction to human sight, he gradually became conscious of a sweep of vision as wide as the universe. For the first time in his life he saw all things as they were; he could distinguish the true from the false, substance from shadow, gold from tinsel. He could see how small were the transient things that had appeared so great and how great were the eternal things that had appeared so small. He could see the littleness of selfishness and the greatness of self-sacrifice. He could realize the sin and folly and brutality of being ambitious for self, and he could see the wisdom and glory and manliness and divineness of being ambitious for God and his fellow men. And in that hour he saw Christ—*realized* Christ;—saw him in his beauty; saw him in his glory; and there came into his heart an infinite yearning for him. And then, as a babe would stretch out its hands toward its mother, he stretched out his hands toward heaven. “O Master,” he cried, “there is none left but

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thee! *Henceforth thou shalt have all there is of me!"*

And in that surrender he won.

After all, there is no victory so complete as that which a brave man wins at the Master's feet.





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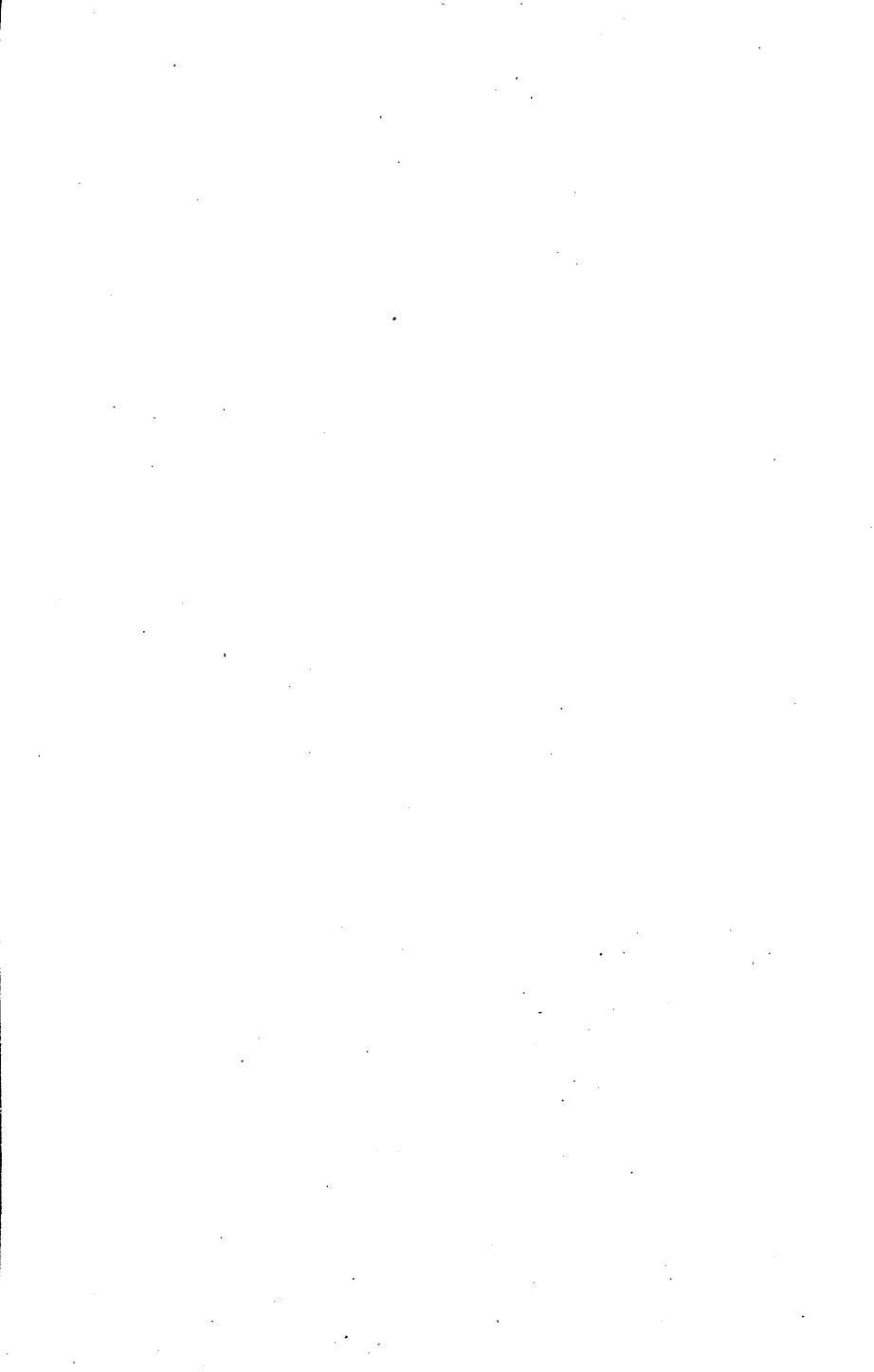
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